CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

MONDAY ▸ MAY 4, 2026 ▸ VOL: 11 ▸ ISSUE: 289 ▸ PAGES 12 ▸ ₹2.00

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INDIA POSITIONS 'DRISHTI' IN ORBIT

SPACEX'S FALCON 9 LAUNCHES GALAXEYE'S 'DRISHTI'

'Drishti' will help address long-standing limitations of conventional systems, enable more reliable and consistent data acquisition across diverse environmental conditions

Mission Drishti by GalaxEye marks a major achievement in our space journey. The successful launch of the world's first OptoSAR satellite and the largest privately-built satellite in India is a testament to our youth's passion for innovation and nation-building.
—Narendra Modi, PM

With 'Drishti' now successfully in orbit, our immediate focus is on completing its commissioning. As we move through this phase, we are already witnessing strong global interest in the differentiated datasets enabled by our OptoSAR payload

Suyash Singh, Founder-CEO, GalaxEye

Congratulations to GalaxEye on the successful launch of Mission Drishti! ISRO is proud to support this achievement by enabling access to its satellite testing facilities fostering innovation and handholding India's emerging private space sector

ISRO

Satellite with many eyes on ground

- **TECHNOLOGY:** It uses a proprietary OptoSAR payload that fuses Radar (SAR) and Electro-Optical (EO) data to provide clearer, more actionable intelligence regardless of weather or lighting conditions..
- **MASS AND SCALE:** At roughly 190 kg, it is India's largest privately built Earth observation satellite, signaling a shift toward privately driven, IP-led innovation in the Indian space sector.
- **APPLICATIONS:** The data will support defense surveillance, agriculture, infrastructure monitoring, and disaster management.
- **HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGING:** Resolution is where Drishti aims to compete with the best in the world and can deliver imagery at a resolution of 1.5 metres and revisit locations globally every 7-10 days.
- **ENHANCED INTELLIGENCE:** The "SyncFused" technology combines data for better interpretation than traditional single-sensor satellites, allowing for advanced surveillance and analytics.
- **FUTURE PLANS:** GalaxEye plans to launch a constellation of 8-10 similar satellites over the next four years to enable high-frequency global imaging.
- **PARTNERSHIP:** The launch is facilitated through SpaceX, showcasing commercial collaboration.

CALIFORNIA

Bengaluru-based space start-up GalaxEye placed its first commercial satellite 'Mission Drishti' in orbit aboard SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket from Vandenberg in California on Sunday.

The firm termed it the "world's first OptoSAR satellite", integrating electro-optical (EO) and synthetic aperture radar (SAR) sensors into a single operational platform

The launch was a milestone in the advancement of Earth observation technologies and reinforcing India's growing capabilities in the global space sector, it stated.

While EO sensors capture high-resolution images during sunlight and clear skies, SAR sensors provide all-weather and all-time images, using radar pulses.

In a statement, Suyash Singh, founder and CEO of GalaxEye, said, "With the satellite (Mission Drishti) now successfully in orbit, our immediate focus is on completing its commissioning.

As we move through this phase, we are already witnessing strong global interest in the differentiated datasets enabled by our OptoSAR payload."

The satellite will help address long-standing limitations of conventional systems and enable more reliable and consistent data acquisition across diverse environmental conditions, the company said.

As a dual-use Earth observation satellite, the mission will support use cases across defence, agriculture, disaster management, maritime monitoring, and infrastructure planning.

The satellite is also expected to complement India's broader initiatives, including the 29 active Earth Observation satellites outlined in ISRO's recent annual report.

GalaxEye aims to scale up Mission Drishti to a constellation of 10 satellites by 2030, developing a robust and sovereign Earth observation infrastructure for India.

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GalaxEye aims to scale up Mission Drishti to a constellation of 10 satellites by 2030, developing a robust and sovereign Earth observation infrastructure for India.

Drishti is the first satellite of GalaxEye, a company started by alumni of IIT Madras.

Kharge slams BJP-RSS for declining press freedom

BENGALURU

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday criticised the BJP-RSS over press freedom, alleging that their stance sends a clear message that independent journalism will face punishment while conformity is rewarded.

He alleged that sections of the media have been reduced to echoing the ruling establishment, while those who persist in asking questions are "targeted relentlessly".

In a post on X on World Press Freedom Day, Kharge said India's position in the World Press Freedom Index has steadily declined since 2014 and alleged that the Sangh Parivar has increasingly "weaponised" legal frameworks to silence newsrooms.

He said the nation must confront a stark and undeniable reality that since 2014, India's position in the World Press Freedom Index has steadily declined, falling to 157th place, under the BJP regime.

Kharge said the media preserves the democratic balance between power and the people.

Sringeri postal re-count: BJP win likely, says Joshi

NEW DELHI

Union Food and Civil Supplies Minister Pralhad Joshi has said that the outcome of the postal ballot recount in Shringeri Assembly constituency indicates a clear possibility of BJP candidate Jeevaraj's victory, and urged authorities to declare the results without delay.

He stated that Jeevaraj has been denied his rightful position as MLA for the past three years due to what he termed an error in the postal vote counting process. According to him, continued delay in announcing the final result is unacceptable and goes against the spirit of timely justice in the electoral process. Joshi stressed that the election officer must act independently and not come under any external pressure while ensuring full compliance with the High Court's directions. He reiterated that the court has clearly instructed that in case discrepancies arise during postal vote recounting, the District Election Officer (DEO) is empowered and obligated to announce the result accordingly.

Manipur student bodies seek 'lasting solution'

IMPHAL

Student organisations representing the indigenous hill communities of Manipur, including the Kuki-Zo and Hmar, on Sunday stated that the tribal groups continued to face a "grave humanitarian crisis" as the state marked three years since the outbreak of a deadly ethnic violence on May 3, 2023.

Citing large-scale displacement of indigenous communities, destruction of their villages and loss of lives, the organisations, including Gangte Students' Organisation, Hmar Students' Association, Zou Sangnaupang Pawlpi and Kuki Students' Organisation, urged the Union Government to intervene urgently.

In a joint statement, the groups said they had submitted a memorandum to the National Human Rights Commission, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Prime Minister's Office, seeking immediate action on the ongoing crisis. They demanded expedited political dialogue under the Suspension of Operations (SoO) framework involving the Centre and insurgent groups.

Iran sends new proposal to US over stalled peace talks

LAHORE

Iran has conveyed a "multi-layered proposal" to Washington in an attempt to break the deadlock over peace talks, a senior official familiar with the development said on Sunday.

US President Trump says he is still not satisfied with Iran's new offer to end the West Asia conflict. He has also indicated that Washington is unlikely to accept any framework that does not include firm guarantees preventing Tehran from developing nuclear weapons.

The Iran war has been on hold since April 8, with one round of peace talks having taken place in Islamabad since then. Pakistan is mediating the peace talks between the US and Iran.

ASSEMBLY ELECTION 2026

MAHA poll showdown: Verdict today

5 BATTLEGROUNDS
SEATS 823

NEW DELHI

Finally, the big day that could reshape the political landscape of India has arrived, as the vote counting for the crucial elections in four states and a union territory – West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam, and Puducherry – is set to take place on Monday. The counting of votes will start at 8 am.

In West Bengal, Trinamool Congress is vying for a fourth-term and is confident despite almost all exit polls projecting its rival BJP an edge.

The results will be keenly watched by Election Commission, which deployed unprecedented number of paramilitary forces after presiding over a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which saw deletion of 27.16 lakh voters. It also ordered a repoll in booths of an entire Assembly constituency, Falta, later May.

In Tamil Nadu, exit polls have projected MK Stalin-led DMK alliance to romp home in the 234-member Tamil Nadu Assembly but all eyes will be on the performance of actor Vijay-led TVK, which a pollster predicted could sink the AIADMK-BJP coalition in the state.

In Kerala, the political rivalry between the CPI (M)-led LDF and the Congress-led UDF has shaped state politics for decades. However, in the 2026 elections, the BJP-led NDA emerged as a key player during the election campaign.

The Pinarayi Vijayan-led LDF is aiming to retain power for a third consecutive term, while the Congress-led UDF hoping for nothing less than an emphatic victory after a 10-year gap. In the meantime, the BJP-led NDA is looking to make inroads into Kerala's political landscape and expand its presence in state politics.

Assembly Election Results 2026

States	Counting in seats	Majority mark
Tamil Nadu	234	118
Kerala	140	71
Assam	126	64
West Bengal	193 (OF 194)	148
Puducherry	30	16

In Assam, BJP is seeking a third term while Congress is seeking to return to the game in full force. While exit polls have not been encouraging for the Congress with BJP projected to get two-third majority, the party believes that its performance would be much better than what is predicted.

UDF allies leave Chief Ministerial choice to Cong

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

AICC general secretary and Kerala in-charge Deepa Dasmunshi on Sunday said UDF allies had left the decision on the chief ministerial candidate to the Congress in the event of the front coming to power.

Speaking to reporters here, Dasmunshi said discussions had been held with alliance partners on the issue and they had conveyed their willingness to abide by the Congress party's decision.

"We have consulted the allied partners. They have given a clear opinion that whatever the Congress decides, they will go with that," she said.

Dasmunshi said speculation over the UDF's chief ministerial face was more pronounced on social media than within the party.

UNDERWATER TRICOLOUR FEAT

Tricolour waves deep under sea as India sets world record

SRI VIJAYA PURAM

The Swaraj Dweep of Andaman and Nicobar Islands on Saturday witnessed a landmark moment in India's adventure and defence history as the country's largest Tricolour was unfurled deep underwater, securing a Guinness World Records recognition.

The massive Tricolour, measuring approximately 60x40 metre, was deployed beneath the sea at Radhanagar beach in a complex, tightly coordinated operation, involving multiple agencies and trained divers at Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island).

The feat brought together over 200 professional scuba divers from across India and was supported by the Andaman & Nicobar administration along with Indian defence forces.

Among the participants was Bengaluru-based adventure sports professional Sharath R Ashok, who played a key role in the successful execution of the high-risk underwater mission.

A trained dive master and scuba instructor, Sharath has over a decade of experience in adventure sports, including scuba diving, paragliding, paramotoring, motocross, and mountaineering. His diverse skill set enabled him to contribute effectively to the demanding conditions of the operation.

The operation was carried out in challenging conditions, with strong currents and significant water pressure adding to the complexity of the task. Despite these difficulties, the coordinated effort of the divers ensured the successful display of the tricolour.

Moments that scripted history

- Guinness World Record for largest underwater national flag.
- 60x40 metre Tricolour unfurled at Swaraj Dweep.
- Over 200 scuba divers participated.
- Event was tightly coordinated by multiple agencies and trained divers.
- Bengaluru adventurer Sharath R Ashok key participant

Lieutenant Governor Admiral DK Joshi formally presented the Guinness World Records certificate to the organising team, recognising the achievement as a moment of national pride and technical excellence.

Speaking after the event, Sharath said the experience was deeply meaningful. He described the Indian Tricolour as a symbol representing unity and strength, adding that unfurling it underwater was a proud moment in his journey as an adventurer. He also credited his long association with adventure sports and wildlife-related activities for preparing him for such a unique challenge.

Sharath, who is the son of Karnataka Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R Ashoka, has emerged as an inspiration for young adventure enthusiasts in the state through this international recognition.

QUICK READ

Woman's charred body found inside burnt car near Doddaballapur

CH NEWSBENGALURU

The charred body of a middle-aged woman was found inside a burnt car near Doddaballapur on Saturday evening, police said. Residents noticed the vehicle engulfed in flames near Jinkebachhahalli and reportedly saw a man fleeing from the spot shortly before the fire spread. Fire and emergency personnel, along with police teams, rushed to the area after receiving information about the incident. However, by the time the flames were brought under control, the car had been completely gutted. During inspection of the vehicle, officials discovered the woman's body inside. Police have launched an investigation to identify the victim and trace the suspect seen escaping.

First wife halts lecturer's second marriage at wedding

CH NEWSBENGALURU

A lecturer's second marriage ceremony was halted after his first wife arrived at the wedding hall and objected to the event in Doddaballapur. According to police, Kumaraswamy, a lecturer, was preparing to marry for the second time despite already being married to a woman from Kerala, who is currently six months pregnant. The couple had reportedly married a year ago while both were working at a private college in Tumakuru. Police said Kumaraswamy had resigned from his job three months ago and allegedly agreed to the second marriage due to family pressure. After learning about the wedding, his first wife reached the venue and confronted him. With assistance from Doddaballapur police, the ceremony was stopped.

Mother accused of selling child for ₹ 5 lakh, police begin

CH NEWSBENGALURU

A man has approached police alleging that his wife sold their young son for Rs 5 lakh following a family dispute in Bengaluru. According to the complaint filed by Ravi Babu, his wife Deepika left home after an argument on April 18, taking their three children with her. The couple, married for 16 years, reportedly had frequent quarrels over petty issues. Police said Deepika allegedly left two of the children at Majestic bus stand and went away with their son. The two children later returned home without their mother and brother. Following Ravi Babu's complaint regarding the missing child, Viveknagar police registered a case and launched an investigation into the allegations.

Dust crisis deepens as Bengaluru's Rs 613-crore sweeper project remains stalled

With summer heat intensifying across the city despite sudden evening showers, dust has emerged as a major concern for commuters and residents.

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Six months after Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar announced an ambitious Rs 613-crore plan to deploy 56 mechanised road-sweeping machines across Bengaluru, not a single new machine has been pressed into service.

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) had directed the city's five corporations — West, East, Central, South and North — to float separate tenders and procure the machines on a rental basis. However, the entire exercise has remained trapped in procedural delays, poor bidder participation and repeated tender cancellations.With dust levels rising sharply during summer and several stretches dug up for civic works, residents and commuters continue to struggle with dusty roads and poor air quality despite occasional evening showers.Officials from multiple corporations admitted that the tendering process has faced major hurdles. In West Bengaluru, only one bidder participated, forcing authorities to explore ways to attract more companies. Central Bengaluru saw no bidders in the first round, prompting officials to reissue the tender. East Bengaluru is still stuck at the technical evaluation stage.North Bengaluru has faced the worst setback, with even the second round of bidding failing to attract bidders."We have very clear guidelines on how the tender should work, and we cannot compromise on them. That is the reason we are proceeding with a third tender call," said Pommala Sunil Kumar, Commissioner of Bengaluru North City Corporation.South Corporation is the only civic body that has managed to progress with the tender process, though officials are yet to disclose the number of machines likely to be hired.Meanwhile, corporations continue depending on outdated and insufficient cleaning equipment. West Corporation currently operates only two sweepers — one truck-mounted and one self-propelled — which are rotated across limited road stretches.Central Corporation has one machine per Assembly constituency, totalling five sweepers. Officials admit these are inadequate to handle the growing layers of dust and silt on city roads."These are clearly insufficient, and their condition is not fit to handle the dust and dug-up silt accumulated on the roads," said Daljeet Kumar, Additional Commissioner of Central Corporation.The situation is especially severe in East Bengaluru, where ongoing drain and footpath works have worsened silt accumulation."We are operating with old sweeping machines and have received one new machine through CSR funding," said Lokhande Snehal, Additional Commissioner.

GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao said mechanised sweeping was also aimed at protecting sanitation workers.
"We do not want pourakarmikas to manually clean arterial roads, as it is risky. While corporations are handling tenders individually, we are hopeful that machines will be deployed soon," he said.

NIA court awards seven-year jail term to convict in LeT-linked terror conspiracy

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A special National Investigation Agency court in Bengaluru has sentenced Vikram Kumar alias Chota Usman to seven years of rigorous imprisonment for his involvement in a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)-linked terror conspiracy connected to the Bengaluru Central Prison radicalisation case.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 30,000 on the 28-year-old convict, who was named as the ninth accused in the case. Seven other accused linked to the same terror module had earlier been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in April this year.

According to investigators, the conspiracy revolved around identifying and radicalising vulnerable inmates inside Bengaluru Central Prison for carrying out terror activities across India.

Father, son suffer burn injuries after petrol attack during family dispute

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 19-year-old youth and his father suffered burn injuries after a domestic dispute allegedly turned violent in Pragathipura near Banashankari on May 1. The Kumaraswamy Layout police have registered a case of attempt to murder and other charges against the father.According to police, the accused, identified as 45-year-old Anand Doddamani, allegedly poured petrol on his son Mallikarjun during an argument over the latter taking his bike without permission. The incident reportedly took place outside their rented house in the evening.In her complaint, Anand's wife Eeramma (38) stated that the family, including their younger 13-year-old son, had been living in the area for several years. Anand works as a mason while Mallikarjun is employed as a labourer in tile fitting work. Eeramma alleged that Anand frequently consumed alcohol and often quarrelled with family members after returning home drunk. On May 1, which was a holiday, Mallikarjun reportedly took his father's bike around 4 pm to visit a temple. Anand allegedly became angry after learning about it and scolded his son over the phone, accusing him of taking the vehicle without permission and associating with "bad company".

Police said Eeramma also informed investigators that Anand had siphoned petrol from the bike a few days earlier and stored it in a bottle inside the house.Later that evening, during another heated confrontation, Anand allegedly grabbed the petrol bottle and poured the fuel on Mallikarjun, who was seated on the bike outside the house. At the same time, a few neighbours were cooking nearby on roadside stoves.As petrol splashed onto the youth, flames from the nearby fire reportedly ignited the fuel, instantly setting Mallikarjun ablaze. Due to the wind and confusion during the incident, petrol also splashed onto Anand, causing him to catch fire as well.Hearing screams from outside, Eeramma and neighbours rushed to the spot and poured water on both victims to extinguish the flames. Mallikarjun, who sustained severe burns, was immediately shifted to Sanjay Gandhi Hospital before being moved to Victoria Hospital for further treatment. Anand was also admitted to Victoria Hospital.Doctors informed police that Mallikarjun suffered nearly 40 per cent burn injuries, while Anand sustained around 18 per cent burns. Police said further action will be taken after Anand recovers sufficiently for questioning.

Comed-K allots exam centres outside Karnataka, students raise concerns

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Several candidates appearing for the Consortium of Medical, Engineering and Dental Colleges of Karnataka (Comed-K) 2026 entrance examination have expressed concern after being allotted centres outside Karnataka despite selecting locations within the state during registration.

The examination is scheduled to be held on May 9.

The issue came to light after hall tickets were released, with many students reporting that they had been assigned centres in neighbouring states such as Chennai, Hyderabad and Tirupati instead of their preferred Karnataka cities, including Bengaluru and Mysuru.

Students took to social media to seek clarification and complain about the inconvenience caused by the unexpected allocations.

"I selected Bengaluru and Mysuru as my preferred centres, but was allotted Chennai. The authorities told us that the allotment is final," said one candidate.

Officials from Comed-K clarified that around 2,800 candidates who applied late could not be accommodated at their preferred centres due to limited availability and heavy demand.

Dr S Kumar, secretary of Comed-K, said candidates had been advised as early as February to complete their applications promptly to secure centres of their choice.

He added that the consortium had increased infrastructure capacity in Karnataka to handle the surge in registrations.

"We created 5,000 additional computer terminals in Bengaluru and Mysuru due to high demand. However, some late applicants had to be allotted centres in other cities," he said.

According to officials, the additional centres outside Karnataka were arranged to ensure all candidates could appear for the examination without delays.Around 1.4 lakh students have registered for Comed-K 2026, which facilitates admissions to undergraduate engineering programmes offered by more than 150 private unaided colleges across Karnataka.

Two children die after mother allegedly poisons them amid family dispute

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A tragic family dispute in Bengaluru ended in the deaths of two young children after their mother allegedly mixed rat poison in milk and consumed it herself in an apparent suicide attempt at Mathikere in Yeshwanthpur.The deceased children have been identified as four-year-old Nived Chaudhary and two-year-old Nirmal Chaudhary. Their mother, Pavithra, is currently undergoing treatment in the intensive care unit of a private hospital and remains in critical condition, police said. According to investigators, the family originally hails from Pavagada and had been living in a rented house in Mathikere for the past several years. Pavithra's husband, Prashant, works at a mobile phone shop in the city. Police said the couple frequently argued over domestic issues.On Saturday evening, another quarrel reportedly broke out between the husband and wife.

Two held for stealing critical railway equipment mistaken as scrap metal

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Nearly a month after vital railway components were stolen from a high-security railway yard in Bengaluru, the Railway Protection Force (RPF) arrested two youths who allegedly mistook the equipment for scrap metal and attempted to sell it.The accused, identified as Santhosh A (21) and Sandeep (21) from Okalipuram, were apprehended by the Bengaluru Division RPF following a prolonged investigation into the theft at the KSR Bengaluru railway yard.According to RPF officials, the duo had initially entered the railway yard intending to commit theft but retreated after noticing heavy security arrangements. However, they allegedly returned about a week later, on April 11, and found what they believed were ordinary metal rods lying inside the premises.Investigators later discovered that the stolen items were actually secondary lateral dampers and yaw dampers critical shock-absorbing components used to stabilise railway coaches and ensure smooth train movement.

High Court sets aside RGUHS decision excluding senate members from inspection panels

CH NEWSBENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has quashed a 2024 resolution passed by the syndicate of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) that excluded senate members from local inspection committees responsible for continuation of affiliation of colleges.

Justice E.S. Indiresh passed the order while allowing petitions filed by J. Nandeesh and other senate members of the university, who had challenged the legality of the syndicate's decision.

The petitioners argued that under the provisions of the RGUHS Act, the senate alone has the authority to make, amend or repeal statutes, and that the syndicate could not unilaterally alter the composition of inspection committees without obtaining senate approval.

Agreeing with the contention, the court observed that any proposal to amend.

Fake free credit card offer dupes Bengaluru lecturer of nearly Rs 3 lakh

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

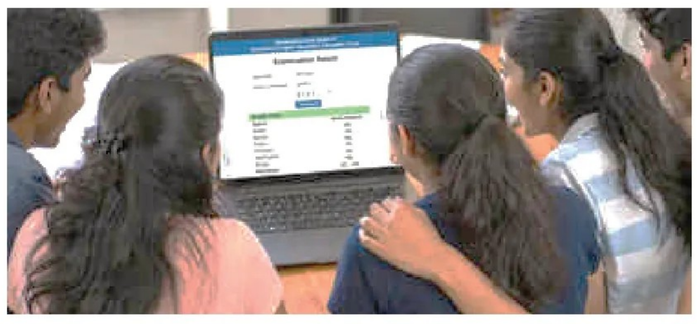
Cybercriminals posing as officials of Punjab National Bank allegedly cheated an engineering college faculty member in Bengaluru of nearly Rs 3 lakh under the pretext of offering a lifetime free credit card.The victim, a resident of Malleswaram and a faculty member at a private autonomous engineering college in KS Layout, lodged a complaint with police after discovering multiple unauthorised transactions from his credit cards and digital wallet.

According to the complaint, the victim received a call on April 26 from a person claiming to be a Punjab National Bank representative offering a Lifetime Free (LTF) credit card.Believing the offer to be genuine, the lecturer agreed to proceed. The caller then sent a link through a text message and asked him to provide certain details. After clicking the link, the victim was reportedly connected to a video call. During the call, the fraudster asked him to show his PAN card for verification. After viewing the document, the caller allegedly informed him that he was not eligible for the new credit card but suggested that showing his existing credit cards could help process the application.Unaware of the scam, the lecturer displayed details of three credit cards issued by different banks.The fraudsters then sent an application link through WhatsApp and instructed him to download what they claimed was the official Punjab National Bank app.

FEAR OF JOB INSECURITY

Paperless property registration sparks fears over jobs among document writers

CH NEWS, BENGALURU



The Karnataka government's pilot project to introduce fully paperless property registration has triggered anxiety among licensed document writers, who fear the move could lead to massive job losses and weaken legal safeguards in property transactions.

The paperless registration system, currently being tested in sub-registrar offices across Chamarajanagar district through the Kaveri 3 platform, aims to eliminate physical paperwork and manual drafting by enabling end-to-end digital document generation.

While the initiative is designed to improve efficiency and reduce human intervention, document writers argue that the system overlooks key legal verification processes traditionally followed during property registration.

According to The Karnataka State Stamps and Registrations Development Authorised Licensed Document Writer's Union, nearly 15,000 licensed document writers operate across Karnataka, while lakhs of others indirectly depend on the profession for employment. Many now fear their roles may become irrelevant under the new digital framework.

One of the primary concerns raised by the association is the absence of signatures on every page of property documents — a practice followed for decades to ensure authenticity and legal validity.

Traditionally, document writers ensure all parties involved in a property transaction sign each page of the document, reducing the possibility of tampering or future disputes. Under the paperless system, they claim this safeguard has been removed.

"Without signatures across pages and without clarity on who drafted the document, the legal strength of such records becomes questionable," said D.K. Sangamesh Yeligar, president of the association.

He also questioned whether such digitally generated documents would stand scrutiny in courts during legal disputes.

Apart from legal concerns, the community is worried about the uncertainty surrounding their future in the new system.

"For years we have been part of the registration system, but now we do not know where we fit into this paperless model," said N. Naveen Kumar, vice-president of the association.

He further argued that under existing central laws, only licensed document writers and legal practitioners are authorised to draft property-related legal documents.

"As per the law, real estate documents can only be prepared by licensed document writers along with legal practitioners. The government must clarify our role in the digital system," he said.

QUICK READ

Seventh grade girl dies suddenly in Joida

Karwar
A 13-year-old schoolgirl died of a suspected heart attack in Chapeli–Gavaliwada village of Joida, shocking her family and locals. The girl, identified as Gangu Gavali, was studying in Class 7 and was said to be healthy with no known medical issues. According to family members, she had spent the day playing as usual before having dinner and going to sleep. On Sunday morning, she woke up feeling unwell and vomited. Moments later, her condition worsened, and she passed away. The incident falls under the limits of Ramanagara Police Station. Authorities have taken note of the case. Her sudden death has raised concerns among residents, as there were no prior signs of illness. Further details are awaited as officials look into the exact cause of death.

Abbayya calls for honest officers in Hubbali

Hubbali
Law and order in the twin cities of Hubbali and Dharwad has come under serious concern, with even ruling party leaders raising questions. Prasad Abbayya expressed unhappiness over police functioning, alleging corruption, harassment, and lack of strict action against crimes. He said some officers were involved in illegal activities and failing to control rising issues. The criticism comes after a recent student suicide case, which sparked public anger and fresh allegations against the police. Opposition leaders had earlier made similar claims, but now voices within the government have added pressure. Abbayya has urged the Home Minister to transfer all officers in the twin cities and appoint honest officials. He also plans to meet the Chief Minister soon. Residents say crimes like betting and smuggling continue unchecked, raising fears about safety and trust in the system.

Bommai inaugurates girls college building in Koppal

Koppal
Former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai inaugurated a new building of Sri Gavisiddeshwara Gurukul Pre-University Residential College for Girls in Kolur-Katralli village. Speaking at the event, he highlighted the importance of education for girls and rural development. The programme was attended by M. N. P. Abhinava Gavisiddeshwara Mahaswamy and other dignitaries, along with political leaders. The new facility aims to provide better learning opportunities and support to students in the region. Locals welcomed the move, calling it a positive step towards improving access to quality education in rural areas.

DCM slams conspiracy in postal ballot tampering

Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar has alleged a massive ballot tampering conspiracy in Sringeri while inspecting the Tungabhadra Dam.

HOSAPETE

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar sparked a political firestorm, alleging a massive conspiracy during the Sringeri postal ballot recount. Speaking during an official visit to the Tungabhadra Dam, the DCM claimed that officials were used to tamper with over 200 ballot papers, calling the incident a "large-scale crime" and a "shame for the country."

Shivakumar stated that despite signatures being provided during the counting process, votes belonging to his party's MLAs were deliberately altered. He compared the situation to previous issues in Jayanagar, labeling the act a direct insult to democracy. "We will not stay silent," he declared, promising to take the matter to court and demanding a thorough investigation into the alleged fraud.

In addition to his political complaints, the DCM inspected the ongoing gate installation at the Tungabhadra Dam. He emphasized that the project is a lifeline for 250,000 farmers and serves as a firm answer to government critics. Shivakumar noted that a Chennai-based organization is handling the repairs, with a crucial new chain expected to arrive on May 7.

While the official deadline for completion is the end of May, the DCM has ordered officials to accelerate their efforts. He wants the primary work finished by May 15 to ensure the dam is ready for the upcoming season. Several ministers and local officials joined him for the inspection, highlighting the government's commitment to securing the region's water supply while navigating a tense legal battle over election integrity.

The counting for the crucial Bagalkot by-election begins today, determining the constituency successor following the late leader's death.

Crucial Bagalkot by-election results to be revealed

BAGALKOT

The fate of Bagalkot hangs in the balance as officials prepare for today's (May 4th) highly anticipated by-election vote counting. This election follows the passing of leader H.Y. Meti, leading to a high-stakes battle between Congress candidate Umesh Meti and BJP veteran Veeranna Charantimath. Residents will finally learn which leader has secured the public's trust.

Voting day saw a significant turnout, with 178,273 people casting their ballots, resulting in a 68 percent voting rate. Interestingly, more women voted than men, which may play a pivotal role in the final tally. Both major parties launched massive campaigns to win the seat. Top Congress leaders, including Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and DCM D.K. Shivakumar, focused heavily on social guarantee schemes and emotional appeals.

On the other side, the BJP utilized heavyweights like B.S. Yediyurappa and B.Y. Vijayendra to galvanize their base. The party is banking on a united front, as local leaders recently settled internal disputes to support Charantimath. In the previous election, a rebel candidate split the BJP's votes, leading to their defeat. This time, the party is confident that a consolidated vote bank and the influence of Hindutva campaigning will lead them to victory.

As the counting begins, political analysts suggest the result will be a clear indicator of the state's current mood. A final picture is expected to emerge by noon, ending weeks of intense speculation and determining the future representation of the Bagalkot constituency.

Tragedy strikes as two boys drown locally

BELAGAVI

A joyful summer morning turned into a nightmare after two young boys drowned while swimming in a well at the Kapileshwara temple premises. The victims have been identified as seven-year-old Shivam Parashuram Sundikar and eleven-year-old Parashuram Raju Neeljakar. The boys had headed out in the morning to escape the summer heat, unaware of the hidden dangers lurking beneath the water's surface.

The scene at the temple was heart-wrenching as family members rushed to the spot in total shock. One father broke down in tears, recalling how his son had playfully kissed him four times on the cheek before leaving the house just hours earlier. Local police, the fire brigade, and SDRF personnel arrived quickly to initiate a search operation, but the depth of the well made rescue efforts difficult for the grieving community.

This incident follows a string of recent water-related tragedies across the region. In Dakshina Kannada, a young rubber tapper named Rakshit recently went missing after being swept away in a river. Further away in Madhya Pradesh, a massive boat capsizing on the Narmada River claimed nine lives during a sudden storm.

Authorities have issued an urgent warning to parents, asking them to monitor their children closely during the school holidays. As the search continues in Belgaum, the Khadebazar police have registered a case, emphasizing the need for better safety barriers around open wells and water bodies to prevent such devastating loss of life.

Tourists escape danger following two narrow escapes

KARWAR

Tourists narrowly escaped injury after two separate vehicle accidents in Uttara Kannada, including a van plunging into the Sharavati River, while a fatal crash occurred elsewhere.

Adventure turned into a nightmare for several travelers, as two separate road accidents involving Tempo Traveler (TT) vehicles occurred in Uttara Kannada. Despite the dramatic nature of the crashes, all tourists miraculously escaped without injuries. In the first incident near Kumbarwad, a vehicle carrying over ten tourists from Bangalore lost control on the Joida-Karwar highway. The group was traveling from Dandeli to Gokarna when the van plunged into a roadside ditch. While the front of the vehicle was badly smashed, everyone inside walked away safely.

The second scare took place at the popular Sharavati boating spot in Honnavar. In a heart-stopping moment, a TT vehicle began rolling backward as the driver lost control, eventually plunging straight into the Sharavati River. Onlookers and boaters watched in terror as the large van splashed into the water. Fortunately, the tourists had already exited the vehicle to enjoy the riverbank, and no boats were in the direct path of the sinking van. Local authorities later used a crane to pull the vehicle from the water.

While these tourists were lucky, the region mourned a separate tragedy in Hassan district. A young man named Manu, who was traveling for his pre-wedding photo shoot, died in a car crash in Sakleshpur. He was set to be married on May 10. These combined events have prompted local officials to urge drivers to use extreme caution on the hilly and winding roads of the district during the busy tourist season.

Spirituality means seeing inner truth says Swamiji

NAVALGUND

In a soul-stirring address, Sri Abhinava Mrutyunjaya Swamiji of Manakwada Deva Mandir defined spirituality as the act of opening the mirror to one's inner self. Speaking at the launch of an eleven-day religious event in Navalgund, the Swamiji emphasized that true spiritual growth begins when a person realizes their own essence and lives with total self-awareness.

The event, which includes a Dharma Jagruta Jatha and a grand bike rally, marks the Guru Pattadhikara Mahotsava. Local MLA and committee president N.H. Konareddy noted the historic nature of the gathering, pointing out that such a major program is being held after a gap of thirty-four years. He praised the local devotees for coming together regardless of caste or creed to ensure the festival's success, highlighting the community's strong unity.

The celebrations began with high energy as hundreds of women took part in a vibrant procession through the town's main streets. Simultaneously, a massive bike rally escorted Sri Siddheshwara Shivacharya in a decorative carriage. Youth leader Vinod Asuti addressed the crowd, stating it is a collective duty to honor a leader who sacrificed personal comforts to guide society toward righteousness.

The stage was graced by several prominent spiritual leaders from various regional mutts, all gathering to support the new presiding officers of Hiremath. As the eleven-day discourse continues, the town of Navalgund has transformed into a hub of religious reflection, drawing thousands of followers seeking wisdom and spiritual peace.

Newly renovated Tungabhadra dam ready for inauguration

VIJAYANAGARA

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar announced that the massive renovation of the Tungabhadra Dam is nearly complete. Following a detailed inspection of the site, the DCM confirmed that all 33 new crest gates have been successfully installed. The official inauguration of the renovated dam is scheduled for May 15, marking a historic milestone for the region's water security.

The ₹54 crore project was fast-tracked to support the 250,000 farmers who rely on the dam as a lifeline. Shivakumar noted that while farmers had to sacrifice one crop cycle for this work, the new gates are built to last for at least fifty years without issues. Final welding is currently underway, and the first chain link set is expected to arrive from Chennai by May 7 to finalize the mechanical setup.

Beyond the repairs, the DCM shared plans for a global tender to remove silt from the reservoir, which would further increase its storage capacity. He also mentioned upcoming discussions with the Andhra Pradesh government regarding the Navali reservoir. "This project is a model for the entire country," Shivakumar stated, though he clarified there are currently no plans to increase the dam's overall height.

During his visit, the DCM also addressed administrative delays, promising to clear 86,000 pending files across various departments. He concluded by reiterating his concerns over recent election tampering allegations in Sringeri, promising a legal fight to protect democratic integrity while celebrating this major engineering success.

WAITING IN THE HEAT

Commuters suffer in sun without shelter

HUBBALI

As summer temperatures soar to record highs this year, commuters at the busy Indi Pump Circle in Old Hubbali are facing a grueling daily struggle. Despite being a major transit point for thousands of travelers, the area lacks a formal bus stand or shelter. Without a roof over their heads, men, women, and children are forced to wait for buses and autos on the dusty roadside, directly exposed to the blistering afternoon heat.

The situation has become particularly dire as the mercury rises, leaving passengers searching desperately for any sliver of shade from nearby trees or shops. Locals report that the lack of infrastructure is not a new problem, but the intensity of this year's heatwave has made the absence of a bus stop a significant health concern. Senior citizens and students are often seen shielding their faces with bags and umbrellas while standing in the scorching sun for long periods.

The Indi Pump Circle is a vital artery for the city's transport, yet the basic necessity of a seating area remains unaddressed. Residents are now calling on the Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation and transport authorities to urgently intervene. They are demanding the immediate construction of a modern bus shelter with adequate seating to protect the public from both the summer sun and the upcoming monsoon rains. Until the government takes note of this infrastructure gap, thousands will continue to risk their health just to catch a ride home.

Mystic tree ritual predicts prosperous harvest season

BAGALKOT

In a fascinating blend of faith and folklore, the village of Gudura in Ilakal taluk witnessed its unique annual fair dedicated to the revered Hulleshwara Temple. Unlike typical festivals marked by grand chariots, this event is known for its striking "running" ritual and a prophetic tree-climbing ceremony that draws thousands of devotees each year.

This year, the designated priest, Maliyappa, performed the much-awaited "Karnika," or divine prophecy. Clad in a traditional blanket and blowing a conch shell, he entered a trance-like state before climbing a sacred tamarind tree. As the crowd fell silent, he proclaimed the cryptic phrase, "Mungari Hingari Takkashta Masana." Locals interpret this as a forecast for the agricultural season, and this year's message is seen as a positive sign, indicating timely rains and a potentially bountiful harvest.

The fair traces its origins to the legend of Hullappa Chandappa, a deity believed to have vanquished demons in the Gudura hills. Following the prophecy, Maliyappa attempted to break an iron chain in the temple precincts, a ritual symbolizing prosperity. With hopeful signs ahead, farmers have begun preparing their fields, placing trust in this enduring tradition.

QUICK READ

PUC toppers felicitation event set for May

MANGALURU

A special programme to honour toppers and guide students on careers will be held on May 4 (today) at Town Hall in Mangaluru. The event is organised by Hikma Educational Trust, MNS Education and Charitable Trust, and HIF India in association with the Puttur Community Center. Students who scored high marks in ESL, PUC, and CBSE exams will be felicitated, with special awards for top performers. The programme will also include career guidance sessions for those unsure about their future studies. Experts will offer one-to-one counselling, details on courses, colleges, scholarships, and competitive exams like NEET, CET, and JEE. Information on government jobs and student schemes will also be shared. Organisers have invited students and parents to attend and make full use of the opportunity.

BJP candidate leads after Sringeri postal recount

CHIKKAMAGALURU

D N Jivaraj of the Bharatiya Janata Party has taken the lead after a recount of postal votes in the Sringeri constituency. Following the recount, Jivaraj secured a narrow lead of 52 votes over Congress candidate Raje Gowda. After the development, he visited Sringeri Sharada Peetham and offered prayers to Goddess Sharadambe. Officials confirmed that 1,822 postal votes were rechecked as per court directions. The updated count showed Jivaraj with 690 votes, while Raje Gowda received 314, with several votes declared invalid. The final result is yet to be officially announced, as reports have been submitted to the court and the Election Commission.

Farmer dies after elephant attack injuries

Ramanagara

A 53-year-old farmer, Kantaraj, died after suffering serious injuries in a wild elephant attack near Mangadahalli in Channapatna taluk. The incident happened last year during a forest-related operation when he was suddenly attacked and badly injured. He had been undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Bengaluru, but doctors could not save him. Villagers have expressed anger over the incident, blaming forest activities and lack of safety measures. They have urged authorities to stop deforestation in the area and take stronger steps to prevent human-wildlife conflicts and protect farmers living near forest regions.

Big day for Davanagere South vote count

Davangere South by-election counting begins today at DRR School under tight security, with 25 candidates awaiting the final results.

DAVANAGERE

The wait is nearly over for Davangere. After days of high-stakes campaigning and quiet anticipation, election officials have finished all arrangements for the South Constituency by-election vote count.

The action centers on DRR School, now transformed into a high-security fortress. To ensure everything runs smoothly, officials have set up a three-layer security shield. Local police, Home Guards, and CRPF soldiers are standing watch to keep the peace. Only those with special QR-coded identity cards like staff, candidates, and their agents, can step inside the gates.

Electoral Officer Santosh Kumar confirmed that the sealed "strong room" holding the EVMs will open at 7:30 AM. The real drama begins at 8:00 AM with postal ballots, followed by the main machine count at 8:30 AM. Inside, 14 tables are ready for 21 rounds of counting. To keep the public updated, a dedicated team will announce results as each round finishes.

The political futures of 25 candidates are currently locked inside those machines. Despite the excitement, the city remains under strict rules. A 100-meter "no-go" zone surrounds the school, and officials have banned public celebrations to maintain order. Each table will have a supervisor and a micro-observer to ensure every single vote is recorded fairly. By today afternoon, the people's voice will be heard, and Davangere will have its new representative.

Bantwal police seize huge haul of drugs

BANTWALA

Bantwal Rural Police arrested two men at Panjala Cross, seizing 423 grams of MDMA worth ₹42.3 lakh and a vehicle in a major anti-narcotics operation.

In a major win for local law enforcement, the Bantwal Rural Police successfully intercepted a massive shipment of illegal drugs. Officers arrested two young men at Panjala Cross in Manchi village after receiving a secret tip about a vehicle transporting banned substances for profit.

The arrested individuals have been identified as 30-year-old Mohammad Nizamuddin and 19-year-old Mohammad Shaheem, both residents of Puttur. During the high-stakes operation, the police recovered 423 grams of MDMA, a dangerous narcotic drug. The seized drugs are estimated to be worth a staggering Rs 42.3 lakh on the black market.

Beyond the narcotics, the police team also impounded a Bolero vehicle used for the smuggling attempt, valued at approximately Rs 3.5 lakh. Officers also recovered three mobile phones and a small amount of cash from the duo. In total, the value of the seized property and drugs exceeds Rs 46 lakh.

Sub-Inspector Manjunath T. led the successful raid alongside a dedicated team of personnel. The officers stopped the suspicious vehicle at a strategic checkpoint, leading to the discovery of the hidden stash. This arrest highlights the ongoing efforts of the South Kannada police to scrub the streets of illegal narcotics and protect the youth from drug abuse.

A tragic collision between a car and a lorry near Gundlupet killed three people, fueling local anger over speeding.

Tragedy on Kerala road claims three lives

CHAMARAJANAGAR

A devastating collision between a soil-laden lorry and a car turned a Sunday trip into a nightmare near Maddayyanahundi. The horrific accident, which occurred on the busy Kerala road in Gundlupet taluk, claimed three lives and left three others fighting for survival in the hospital.

The victims, all from Kerala, were identified as Munir, 30, Munira, 45, and three-year-old Mohij. The impact of the crash was so violent that the car was crushed almost beyond recognition. Three other passengers—Sania Mirza, Sahal Parveen, and Bilal, sustained critical injuries. They are currently receiving emergency treatment at the SIMS facility, where their condition remains serious.Local farmers and residents have reacted with fury following the crash. For months, villagers have protested against the reckless speed of heavy tippers and lorries transporting soil and minerals across the border. Many are outraged that fertile lake silt is being moved to Kerala under tarpaulins, often bypassing check posts. This tragedy comes just days after another accident involving a tipper claimed four members of a single family in the same region. Gundlupet police have registered a formal case and seized both vehicles involved in the collision. Angry locals are now demanding stricter oversight from the mining and revenue departments to stop speeding heavy vehicles. As investigations continue, the community mourns the loss of innocent lives, highlighting the growing danger on the district's highways due to unchecked commercial traffic and negligent driving.

EMPTY POTS AND LOUD DRUMS FOR WATER

GURUMATHKAL

The streets of Killanakera village echoed with the rhythmic banging of drums and the clatter of empty plastic pots. Frustrated by a severe drinking water shortage, hundreds of villagers launched a massive lightning protest to demand immediate action from local authorities. Men and women marched through the village, holding their "kodas" high to symbolize their thirst.

The situation in the village has become critical. Residents reported that the local water purification plant has been broken for a long time, forcing them to survive on inadequate supplies. To make matters worse, broken pipelines are leaking, allowing sewage to mix with the drinking water. Protesters expressed deep fear that this contamination will lead to a deadly outbreak of infectious diseases, especially as a heatwave alert has been issued for the district.

Beyond the water crisis, the village is struggling with poor sanitation, broken roads, and frequent power cuts. Stagnant drains have created a foul stench that pervades the area, making daily life unbearable. The villagers placed the blame squarely on the negligence of the Gram Panchayat and water department officials. They questioned how a Panchayat center could be left in such a dismal state.

The protesters are now calling on the District Collector and the Zilla Panchayat CEO to visit the village personally. They are refusing to back down until a permanent solution is found for their basic needs. For the people of Killanakera, the empty pots are a loud cry for dignity and health.

Yadagir under yellow alert as temperatures soar

YADGIR

Residents of Yadgir are bracing for a sweltering start to the week as the India Meteorological Department issued a severe heatwave warning. A "Yellow Alert" is now in effect till May 5, prompting District Collector Harshal Bhoyar to urge the public to take immediate safety precautions to avoid heatstroke and dehydration.With the mercury rising, the District Disaster Management Authority has advised citizens to stay indoors during the peak heat hours of 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Health officials suggest drinking plenty of fluids, such as buttermilk, lemon water, and ORS, while steering clear of alcohol, tea, coffee, and sugary sodas which can dehydrate the body faster. When heading out, people should opt for light-colored cotton clothing, umbrellas, and hats. The warning also extends to the rural workforce. Farmers and laborers are encouraged to finish their field tasks during the cooler morning or evening hours to avoid physical exhaustion. Special care is also required for livestock; the administration has instructed owners to keep cattle in shaded areas and provide them with water several times a day to prevent heat-related illness. If anyone feels dizzy, nauseous, or unusually weak, they are urged to seek medical help immediately. As the district enters these three critical days of extreme weather, the administration stresses that following these simple guidelines is the best way to stay safe. Remember, staying hydrated and staying in the shade could save your life this week.

Fire ravages famous Antaraganga hills in Kolar

KOLAR

A devastating forest fire broke out in the scenic foothills of the Antaraganga hills, causing widespread destruction of the local ecosystem. Authorities believe the blaze was no accident, suspecting that miscreants deliberately set fire to sections of the forest along the popular trekking paths used by thousands of visitors.

Antaraganga is a beloved destination for both religious devotees and tourists, but the weekend's events have left the landscape scarred.

Hard work pays off for bright students

YEDRAMI

The air in Ijeri village was filled with pride, as the community gathered to celebrate their brightest young minds. Organized by the Rural Development Struggle Committee, the special felicitation ceremony honored local students who achieved outstanding results in their recent SSLC and PUC examinations.

Shravanakumar Nayaka, President of the Committee, presided over the event with a message of hope. He noted that the high marks scored by these students are a direct result of their relentless hard work and dedication. "Awarding talent today motivates the younger children to dream bigger tomorrow," Nayaka said. He encouraged the achievers to keep pushing forward, aiming for top government positions and careers that serve society.

Among those honored for the 10th grade were Nirsaga Shankara Desai, who scored a brilliant 99.2%, followed by Manjunath, Yallamma, and others who crossed the 85% mark. In the PUC category, Avinash Yamanappa Guttedar led the pack with an impressive 96.6%, alongside Shasikant, Rohit, and Jyoti. In total, nearly 30 students were given certificates and awards for their academic excellence.

The event saw several village dignitaries, including former Panchayat President Annaraya Patila, who shared their joy with the families. As the students stood on stage with their awards, the program served as a powerful reminder that rural talent is second to none. For the families of Ijeri, it was more than just a ceremony, it was a glimpse into a brighter, more successful future for their village.

Vital health camp supports rural cattle owners

YEDRAMI

In a major effort to protect rural livelihoods, the Veterinary Department hosted a vital livestock health camp and vaccination drive in Konasirasagi village this Sunday. Chief Veterinary Officer Dr. Prabhu Kallura led the initiative, urging local farmers to prioritize the health of their animals to ensure a stable and growing income.The camp focused on the ninth round of vaccinations against the dreaded foot-and-mouth disease, a common threat to cattle in the region. Dr. Kallura highlighted that while traditional agriculture is important, adopting scientific methods in dairy, sheep, and goat farming can significantly boost a family's earnings. He encouraged farmers to view their livestock as valuable assets that require modern medical care to thrive. During the event, medical teams conducted thorough health check-ups and provided treatments for various ailments. A major part of the program included vaccinations against skin diseases and the distribution of free insecticides to local shepherds. With the summer heat intensifying, experts also sat down with owners to share essential tips on managing cattle during the hot season to prevent dehydration and heat-related stress.In total, about 70 cattle were successfully vaccinated during the drive.

THIRST IN THE FOREST

Tribals forced to drink dirty river water

MYSORE

While modern cities thrive, the tribal residents of Golur in HD Kote taluk are fighting a desperate daily battle for a basic human right, clean drinking water. For generations, these families have lived in the forest, yet they remain forgotten by the officials and politicians who once begged for their votes.

Without taps or wells, villagers are forced to dig small pits in the dry riverbed to collect whatever moisture seeps through. They filter this sandy, contaminated water through thin cloths, hoping to make it safe for their children. One elderly resident shared her pain with watery eyes, asking who would be responsible if their little ones fell deathly ill from the grime they are forced to swallow.

The frustration in the community is reaching a boiling point. Tribal leader Vijay Kumar noted that despite numerous complaints, leaders only offer empty promises that never turn into action. They feel abandoned, noting that politicians who were once friendly during election season have now completely vanished. While the state government discusses grand plans like the Jaljeevan Mission to provide piped water to millions, the reality on the ground in Golur remains unchanged and bleak.

Local officials claim they are waiting for formal reports before taking action, but for the thirsty families of the river, time is running out. They are tired of being a "forgotten people" and are demanding immediate help before a major health crisis strikes their community. Justice, they say, should not be as scarce as their

Pilot confusion sparks mid-air drama in Sindhanur

RAICHUR

A high-profile mix-up at the Sindhanur Junior College grounds left district officials and police scrambling. The confusion began when a helicopter carrying Kannada superstar Kichcha Sudeep mistakenly landed on a helipad specifically reserved for Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, sparking a brief period of anxiety for security teams.Both the actor and the politician were arriving in the city to attend a mass wedding ceremony. To accommodate the VIP guests, the district administration had prepared three separate helipads in the same field. However, the proximity of the landing spots reportedly confused Sudeep's pilot, who touched down on the wrong pad.

QUICK READ

53 units collected in blood donation drive

Khanapura

A voluntary blood donation camp was held at the Government First Grade College in Khanapura with support from the Health Department and district blood banks. The programme was organised by NSS, Scouts, Guides, and Red Cross units. Students, teachers, and guests together donated 53 units of blood to the district blood bank. Officials said the drive will help meet emergency medical needs in the region. NSS coordinator Mallappa Balikai highlighted the importance of voluntary donation. Several health officials, college staff, and coordinators were present and supported the successful conduct of the camp.

Police crack down on cricket betting in Belagavi

Belagavi

Police from the Camp Station raided an IPL cricket betting operation in the city and arrested a 23-year-old man, Sahil Ramesh Patil, from Shastri Nagar. Officers seized □12,000 in cash and a mobile phone during the operation. The raid was conducted by a special team led by Inspector Anam Onakudare. Police said further investigation is underway to identify others involved in the illegal betting network.

Farmers announce protest over crop insurance delay

Rattihalli

Farmers in Kagala and nearby villages have raised strong protests against what they call anti-farmer policies of the state government. Former Agriculture Minister B. C. Patil said farmers did not receive proper compensation for last year's rain-hit crops and claimed crop insurance payments remain limited and delayed. He warned of a large protest on May 6, where thousands of farmers may surround the Tahsildar office. Leaders also criticised the government for neglecting agriculture issues.

Stray dog catching drive after child attack

Badagi

A major operation was carried out in Hirehalli village after a stray dog attack injured a child. Authorities said more than 80 stray dogs were caught as part of the drive. The action followed public anger over repeated dog attacks and alleged negligence in village sanitation. Villagers blamed poor cleanliness and waste management for the rising stray dog problem and demanded action against local officials.

Puttur turns fallen leaves into black gold

Puttur launches an eco-friendly pilot project, converting fallen leaves into nutrient-rich compost to promote sustainable and greener urban living.

PUTTUR

In a smart move toward a greener future, Puttur has launched a pioneering project to turn its messy autumn leaves into rich, garden-ready compost. Instead of trucking bags of dry leaves to massive waste plants, the city is now processing them right where they fall. This eco-friendly pilot project, located near the Amar Jawan Memorial at Kille Maidan, aims to clean the streets while feeding the earth.

The initiative is a team effort between the Puttur City Municipality and the Bengaluru-based NGO, Saahas, with funding support from HDB Financial Services. Launched on World Earth Day, the project uses two specially designed five-foot iron containers. Municipal workers collect fallen leaves from the nearby trees and layer them inside these bins with water and a "starter" compost to speed up the natural rotting process.

To keep the equipment from rusting, officials have cleverly raised the units off the ground. The two bins are used in rotation, while one "cooks" the leaves into soil, the other is filled with fresh debris. Experts expect the first batch of nutrient-rich compost to be ready in about two months.

Initially, this "black gold" will be used to beautify local parks and city greenery. If the pilot is successful, officials hope to expand the model across other neighborhoods. By treating waste as a resource rather than a burden, Puttur is proving that sustainable urban living can start with something as simple as a fallen leaf.

Udupi's busy Trasi junction left without toilets

UDUPI

Trasi Junction faces severe neglect, lacking public toilets, bus shelters, and basic hygiene facilities for thousands of daily commuters.

Trasi Junction, a bustling gateway on the Byndoor–Kundapur highway, has become a symbol of administrative neglect. Despite being a major transit hub for thousands of commuters and tourists heading to the famous Maravanthe beach, the area lacks a single public toilet, forcing visitors and locals into humiliating situations daily.

The crisis hits women workers, children, and the elderly the hardest. With over 100 shops in the vicinity, female employees are often forced to plead with nearby hotels or private houses just to use a restroom. For many others, the lack of facilities has led to open defecation along the roadsides, creating a foul stench and raising serious health alarms for the community."We have begged authorities for a basic toilet for years, but nothing happens," says Veerendra, a local auto-driver. The problems don't stop at sanitation. Commuters are also left standing in the sun due to the lack of a proper bus shelter, and there is no clean drinking water available. Even safety is at risk, a vital CCTV camera near the bus stop vanished over a year ago and has never been replaced.Trash continues to pile up at the junction, while the absence of a designated auto-stand adds to the traffic chaos. As local residents lose their patience, they are demanding that the district administration stop ignoring this vital hub. For a region promoted as a tourism hotspot, the lack of basic dignity for its travelers is a growing embarrassment.

Leaders demand Dalit Chief Minister for Karnataka

CHITRADURGA

A powerful call for change echoed through the state as local leaders demanded that a Dalit leader be appointed as the Chief Minister. During a press conference on Saturday, H.K. Basavaraj, the president of the Dalit Chalawadi Mahasabha, urged the Congress party to recognize the loyalty and hard work of its veteran politicians.

The main focus of the demand is Mallikarjun Kharge, the AICC President. With sixty years of public service, Kharge is described as an honest and highly experienced leader. Basavaraj noted that even current Chief Minister Siddaramaiah would likely be happy to see someone of Kharge's stature take the lead. The community feels that now is the perfect time for a Dalit leader to hold the top post to ensure fair representation.

Other prominent names mentioned for the role include Dr. G. Parameshwara, K.H. Muniyappa, and Satish Jarakiholi. The Mahasabha leaders suggested that if the party offers three top seats to these leaders, it would satisfy the community's long-standing hopes. They believe these men have proven their dedication by helping the party win power multiple times in the past.

The group issued a firm warning, if their voices aren't heard, they plan to hold a massive rally in Chitradurga or Davanagere.

AYURVEDA IS INDIA'S RICH GIFT TO WORLD

UDUPI

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Cybercriminals defrauded a Mangaluru woman of ₹6.84 lakh through a fake "FedEx cargo" scam, claiming a high-value parcel from her husband was stuck in customs.

Fake cargo call costs Mangaluru woman lakhs

MANGALURU

A 44-year-old woman's trust was cruelly exploited by cybercriminals who drained ₹6.84 lakh from her bank account using a sophisticated "parcel scam." The fraudsters convinced the victim that a high-value shipment worth ₹5.5 crore, sent by her husband in Dubai, was stuck in customs.

The ordeal began on April 21 when the woman received a WhatsApp call from a London-based number. Knowing her husband often sent packages home, she didn't suspect a trap when the caller mentioned a "FedEx cargo" delivery. By April 27, the scammers upped the ante, claiming the box was filled with gold, British pounds, and a diamond watch.To "release" this treasure, the criminals led her through a maze of fake fees. Over several days, she was pressured into paying ₹1.10 lakh for customs, followed by a negotiated ₹2.24 lakh for GST. The demands didn't stop there, they squeezed another ₹2.50 lakh for documentation at Mumbai airport and ₹1 lakh for currency conversion. Each time, the victim hoped the next payment would finally bring the parcel to her door.

The realization hit only after she had transferred a total of ₹6,84,500 and the scammers went silent. Realizing the "treasure" never existed, she approached the Kadri police to file a formal complaint. Authorities are now warning citizens to be wary of international calls demanding money for deliveries, reminding the public that official agencies never ask for taxes or fees via private bank transfers.

Doddaballapur workers celebrate new hospital opening

DODDABALLAPUR

After more than a decade of waiting and countless protests, the 100-bed ESI Hospital in Bashettihalli was finally inaugurated. The opening marks a major victory for thousands of local industrial workers who, for years, were forced to travel all the way to Bengaluru just to access basic healthcare facilities.

The project, which began way back in 2013, moved at a snail's pace for over ten years. While the building structure was finished some time ago, the doors remained locked as expensive medical equipment sat inside gathering dust. Local labor unions refused to stay silent, holding multiple rallies and submitting formal requests to the Chief Minister to demand that the facility be put to use for the struggling workforce.

Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya officially opened the hospital through a virtual ceremony. Joining the event were Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje and local leaders, including MP Dr. K. Sudhakar and MLA Dhiraj Muniraju.

'Live by Ambedkar's principles, not just portraits'

HAROHALLI

A call for true social equality rang out today in Jakkasandra village as residents gathered to celebrate the 135th birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. While the village streets were filled with a grand portrait procession, local leaders reminded the community that true respect for the leader lies in practicing his values rather than just performing rituals.

Annadanappa, the State Chief Executive Officer of the Bahujan Samaj Party, delivered a powerful message during the event. He noted that remembering Ambedkar is not enough if the society remains divided. He lamented that the dream of an egalitarian society remains trapped in books and declarations, while modern political parties often use caste to gain power instead of helping the people. "Class and communal conflicts will only end when we build a society where everyone is truly equal," he stated.

The village head, Ravikumar, echoed these sentiments, describing Ambedkar as a global humanist whose life serves as a model for the entire world. He took pride in the fact that many nations have adopted Ambedkar's ideas into their own laws.

Mysuru ranks second for fast government services

MYSURU

The "Cultural City" of Mysuru has achieved a major milestone by securing the second rank in Karnataka for the timely delivery of government services. Under the state's popular "Sakala" scheme, the district has transformed its administrative speed, ensuring that citizens no longer have to face long waits at government offices.

This success is a remarkable turnaround for the district. Just six months ago, in November 2025, Mysuru was struggling at the 25th position. However, through strict monitoring and a new "people-first" approach, it climbed to fourth place in January before finally landing the silver medal this April. The Sakala scheme, backed by the 2011 Citizens Guarantee of Services Act, mandates that officials provide services within a fixed timeframe.

The achievement is credited to the hard work of Additional District Collectors P. Sivaraju and R. Aishwarya. The duo implemented a high-tech tracking system using WhatsApp groups and regular online meetings to keep staff on their toes. A new "same-day" goal was introduced, where officials were encouraged to process applications submitted in the morning by the evening.

THE KALI'S DEADLY GRIP

River monster attacks man near local bank

DANDELI

A quiet morning turned into a nightmare when a 42-year-old man was nearly dragged to his death by a crocodile. The victim, Ananda Lalluji Mannavadda, is currently fighting for his recovery after the terrifying encounter took place on the banks of the Kali River in the Uttara Kannada district.

The incident highlights a growing concern over local infrastructure. Ananda, a resident of Kulagi Road, had originally intended to use a nearby public restroom. However, finding the facility in a state of total decay and unusable, he was forced to head down to the riverbank for his morning routine. It was there that a crocodile lunged from the water, clamping its jaws onto him and attempting to pull him into the depths.Hearing Ananda's desperate screams, brave locals rushed to the scene. The group managed to scare the predator away, successfully rescuing him from certain death. Ananda suffered severe injuries to his legs and other parts of his body. After receiving emergency first aid at the local government hospital, doctors shifted him to Dharwad for specialized surgery.Following the attack, police officials and forest department staff visited the riverbank to inspect the area. While authorities are taking action to prevent further incidents, the attack has left the community shaken. Neighbors are now calling for better maintenance of public facilities, hoping that no one else has to risk their life just to meet basic needs. Ananda remains under medical care as the town prays for his recovery.

Women protesters slam congress over policy delays

RAMANAGARA

Tensions flared at Aizur Circle as members of the BJP Mahila Morcha staged a spirited protest against the Congress party. The demonstrators accused the opposition of blocking the full implementation of the Nari Shakti Vandana Act, a landmark law designed to reserve 33 percent of seats for women to ensure their political empowerment.

The protesters gathered in the heart of the city, shouting slogans and waving banners. District President of the Morcha, Vaidya Venkatesh, addressed the crowd, stating that while the NDA government has pushed for gender equality, the Congress party has stood in the way of progress. He argued that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar envisioned a nation where women held equal power, yet current opposition tactics seem to go against that very dream.

QUICK READ

Over 700 booked for drunk driving

Hyderabad
Traffic police in Hyderabad and Cyberabad caught over 700 people for driving under the influence of alcohol during a weekend special drive. Hyderabad Traffic Police booked 445 offenders, while Cyberabad police apprehended 283. The two-day drive, held on May 1 and 2, aimed to improve road safety. Among those caught in Hyderabad, 371 were two-wheeler riders, 26 were three-wheeler drivers, and 48 were driving four-wheelers and other vehicles.

Storm, negligence suspected in Bargi dam tragedy

Jabalpur
Madhya Pradesh Tourism Minister Dharmendra Singh Lodhi said the Bargi Dam cruise tragedy was caused by a sudden storm but admitted negligence cannot be ruled out. Calling the incident deeply distressing, he said the government is handling the matter seriously and transparently. After a four-day search operation, he assured that responsibility will be fixed once the inquiry is complete. The Minister noted lapses could involve poor safety checks, weak weather monitoring, or lack of proper operational preparedness.

Govt negotiated Hajj fare hike: Rijiju

New Delhi
Union Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju on Sunday said the central government stepped in to reduce a proposed sharp increase in Hajj airfares, following rising costs triggered by tensions in West Asia.Rijiju explained that the conflict involving Iran and the US-Israel situation led to higher aviation expenses, prompting airlines to initially propose a fare hike of around $400 for Hajj pilgrims. However, he said the government intervened to ensure that pilgrims, especially from economically weaker backgrounds, are not burdened. He said senior officials from the ministry held discussions with airlines and successfully brought down the increase to $100 for pilgrims travelling through the Hajj Committee of India. For those travelling via private operators, the increase has been limited to $150."We do not want poor pilgrims to be unable to go for Hajj due to financial constraints," Rijiju said, adding that the government prioritised affordability while balancing operational costs faced by airlines.

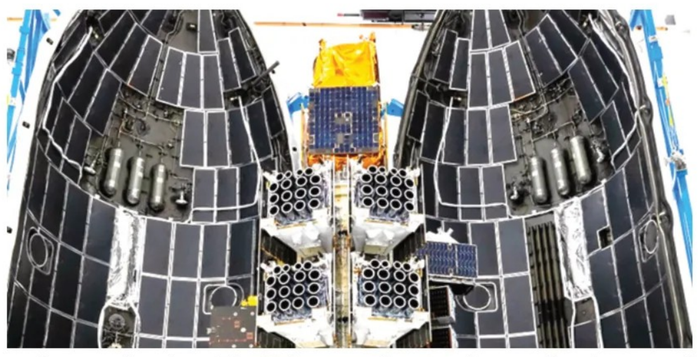
'Mission Drishti' exhibits India's youth innov power

'It reflects the passion of country's youth for innovation and nation-building, while also underlining India's rising tech capabilities'

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday described Mission Drishti as a major milestone in India's space journey, following the successful launch of the world's first OptoSAR satellite.

In a post on X, he said the achievement reflects the passion of the country's youth for innovation and nation-building, while also underlining India's rising technological capabilities.The mission was developed by GalaxEye, a Bengaluru-based startup, which launched its first commercial satellite, Drishti, into orbit aboard the Falcon 9



rocket on Sunday. The Prime Minister congratulated the founders and the entire team for the successful mission and extended his best wishes for future achievements.Mission Drishti is considered a significant step forward in Earth observation technology and highlights India's expanding presence in the global space sector. Weighing about 190 kg, it is the largest privately developed Earth observation satellite in the country.

The satellite is described as the world's first to combine Electro-Optical (EO) and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) sensors into a single operational platform. This advanced integration allows it to capture high-quality images in all weather conditions, both during the day and at night.

GalaxEye has equipped the satellite with its "SyncFused OptoSAR" payload, which merges optical imaging with radar capabilities. While traditional optical satellites offer detailed images but are affected by clouds and darkness, radar systems can penetrate clouds, smoke, and rain, ensuring continuous and reliable imaging.

India hosts BIMSTEC Youth Leadership Exchange Programme

The initiative aimed to strengthen regional ties through youth empowerment and leadership development

NEW DELHI

India hosted a week-long BIMSTEC Youth Leadership Exchange Programme from April 25 to 30, bringing together over 70 young leaders from across the Bay of Bengal region.

The initiative aimed to strengthen regional ties through youth empowerment and leadership development.

According to Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, the programme was organised in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement to promote youth exchanges in the region. It was conducted in collaboration with Art of Living Foundation in Bengaluru and Bhubaneswar.

The programme included participants from all seven member countries of BIMSTEC and focused on leadership training, regional awareness, and collaborative problem-solving. It aimed to prepare future-ready leaders by combining personal well-being, systems thinking, and community engagement.

Officials said the initiative provided a practical learning environment where participants could exchange ideas, experiment, and develop solutions to shared regional challenges. It reflects India's commitment to strengthening sustainable cooperation in its neighbourhood.

The programme also aligns with broader efforts to boost trade and investment within BIMSTEC. Earlier, the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka welcomed India's leadership of the BIMSTEC Business Council, led by Tribhuvan Darbari, focusing on trade facilitation, connectivity, and MSME cooperation.

These efforts support the "Bangkok Vision 2030," which aims to make the Bay of Bengal region more connected, resilient, and economically strong. In addition, BIMSTEC Secretary General Indra Mani Pandey highlighted the importance of business partnerships in driving regional growth.

The youth leadership programme complements other initiatives, including cultural and sustainability programmes, reinforcing India's role in nurturing future regional leaders.

POLICY MATTERS MORE THAN GENDER: SHAILAJA

KANNUR

Senior CPI-M leader K. K. Shailaja on Sunday downplayed the debate over Kerala having a woman Chief Minister, saying governance depends on policies, not gender, she said leadership should be judged by vision, decisions, and delivery rather than identity.Her remarks come amid speculation about the state possibly getting its first woman Chief Minister, with some projecting her as a contender if the Left Democratic Front (LDF) returns to power. However, Shailaja dismissed such discussions as unnecessary and premature.

She reaffirmed that the LDF is contesting the elections under the leadership of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, praising his experience and governance over the years. She expressed confidence that he would win comfortably from the Dharmadam constituency.Shailaja also made it clear that she has no personal ambition for the Chief Minister's post. She said she is contesting the election as directed by the party and will serve as an MLA if elected. Leadership and ministerial decisions, she added, are taken collectively by the party at the right time.Focusing on her Peravoor constituency, Shailaja said voters are more concerned about development than leadership debates. She noted that people are demanding progress and better infrastructure, similar to other regions.Known for her role during the COVID-19 pandemic as Health Minister, Shailaja said her past work is recognised by some voters. However, she stressed that the current election is centred on development and welfare delivery.As Kerala awaits the Assembly election results, the LDF continues to stand united behind Pinarayi Vijayan, even as discussions on gender representation remain part of the political conversation.

2 held for firing at BJP leader's house in Bengal

KOLKATA

Police have arrested two persons for allegedly firing at the house of BJP leader Kundan Singh in Noapara. The incident occurred on Saturday night when two men arrived on a motorbike and fired shots before fleeing. CCTV footage helped police identify the accused. The BJP has alleged involvement of Trinamool-linked miscreants. Tension prevails in the area, while BJP leader Arjun Singh also echoed similar claims.

Armed robbers injure staff in Karimnagar jewellery heist

HYDERABAD

At least three employees were injured after armed robbers attacked a jewellery showroom in Karimnagar city of Telangana on Sunday, police said.Five unidentified men posing as customers entered the PMJ Jewellery showroom in the Jyothinagar area. While being shown ornaments, they suddenly pulled out firearms and opened fire to create panic and stop resistance. The attackers then looted jewellery from display counters and fled the scene.

According to reports, four staff members sustained gunshot injuries and were taken to a nearby private hospital. Doctors said their condition is stable, and they are being shifted to Hyderabad for further treatment.

CCTV footage showed the armed men threatening employees and forcing them, including a security guard, to kneel down with raised hands. One of the robbers blindfolded the guard before escaping. None of the attackers had covered their faces.

Local residents alerted the police after hearing gunshots. Task Force teams quickly reached the spot and sealed the area. Senior officials, including Police Commissioner Ghouse Alam, visited the showroom and formed special teams to track the suspects.

Forensic experts collected evidence, and investigators are examining CCTV footage to identify the accused and trace their escape route. A large-scale manhunt has been launched, with checkpoints set up across the city.

Deshmukh slams govt, seeks Shakti Act roll out

MUMBAI

Former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Sunday criticised the state government over recent rape-murder cases in Pune district and demanded immediate implementation of the Shakti Act. Addressing a press conference, Deshmukh questioned whether there is any "fear of law" under the government led by Devendra Fadnavis. He referred to two incidents involving minors in Bhor and Chakan, calling them deeply disturbing and raising serious concerns about safety.He said the Shakti Act, passed during his tenure under the previous government, provides for strict punishment, including the death penalty within a limited time frame for such crimes. However, he pointed out that the law is still awaiting final approval from the Centre.Deshmukh accused both the state and central governments of shifting responsibility instead of acting decisively. He claimed that if the law had been implemented earlier, it could have acted as a strong deterrent against such crimes.The former minister also expressed concern over the safety of women and children, stating that there is a lack of effective measures to prevent such incidents. He urged authorities to ensure that the recent cases are handled through fast-track courts and that strict punishment is given at the earliest.Calling for unity beyond political differences, Deshmukh stressed the need to implement the Shakti Act without delay to strengthen law enforcement and prevent crimes against vulnerable groups.

Discussions on Abhay's Africa poetry held

NEW DELHI

A literary discussion explored poet-diplomat Abhay K's new book, highlighting Africa's history, culture, and diversity through poetry.wThe India International Centre hosted a discussion on Abhay K's latest book, The Alphabets of Africa, bringing together diplomats, scholars, and students. The session, held on Saturday, featured a conversation with Siddharth Mallavarapu from Shiv Nadar University.Published by Penguin Random House India, the book is described as a "poetic atlas" that presents Africa from A to Z through 180 poems. Each letter highlights key figures, places, and cultural elements, offering readers a deeper understanding of the continent's rich past and present.

TMC, BJP supporters clash near counting centre

KOLKATA

A minor clash broke out between supporters of the Trinamool Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party near a counting centre in Bidhannagar, police said on Sunday.

The incident took place late Saturday night near the strongroom area, where tensions rose after an argument between workers of the two parties. What started as slogan-shouting soon turned into a brief physical confrontation. Security personnel, including central forces, quickly reached the spot, and local police stepped in to control the situation.

Authorities dispersed the crowd, separated supporters of both sides, and set up barricades to prevent further clashes. Officials confirmed that the situation was brought under control without any major escalation.

The BJP alleged that the clash started after Trinamool supporters put up party flags at a temporary camp outside the counting centre. On the other hand, Trinamool Congress members accused central forces of using force against their workers. Police, however, did not confirm these claims and maintained that the situation was handled promptly.

Following the incident, security has been increased around the strongroom and other counting centres across the state. The administration has also banned fireworks and victory processions near counting locations to maintain law and order.

Counting of votes for 293 Assembly constituencies in West Bengal will take place on Monday at 77 centres. The Election Commission of India has also ordered re-polling in all booths of the Falta constituency due to reported irregularities.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has asked her party's counting agents to remain alert and seek recounts in close contests. Officials said strict security arrangements are in place to ensure a peaceful counting process across the state.

HEALTH-FIRST

Health ministry issues childhood diabetes care guidelines

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has released a new guidance document on childhood diabetes to improve early detection, treatment, and long-term care across the country.

The document was unveiled at the National Summit on Best Practices in Public Healthcare Service Delivery and sets up a standard national framework for screening, diagnosis, treatment, and management of diabetes in children. It marks a major step in integrating childhood diabetes care into India's public health system.

Under the guidelines, all children from birth to 18 years will be screened through community and school-based programmes. Suspected cases will undergo immediate blood sugar testing and be referred to district hospitals for confirmation and treatment.

A key highlight is the provision of free care at public health facilities. This includes diagnostic services, lifelong insulin therapy, glucometers, test strips, and regular follow-up care. The aim is to reduce financial burden on families and ensure continuous treatment.

The framework also introduces a connected care system, linking early screening at the community level with treatment at district hospitals and advanced care at medical colleges. This ensures smooth and continuous care for affected children.

To support early detection, the initiative promotes the "4Ts" awareness model—Toilet, Thirsty, Tired, and Thinner—helping parents and teachers identify warning signs of Type 1 diabetes.

The document also focuses on training families and caregivers in insulin use, glucose monitoring, and emergency response. It includes clear treatment protocols and steps to prevent complications.

Officials said the initiative will help reduce deaths, improve quality of life, and lower long-term healthcare costs.

Child rape-murder: Fadnavis promises fast-track trial, death penalty

NAGPUR

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday said the government will seek the death penalty for the accused in the Pune child rape-murder case and ensure a fast-track trial.

A 65-year-old man with a criminal record has been arrested for allegedly assaulting and killing a four-year-old child in Bhor tehsil of Pune district on May 1. The incident sparked widespread outrage, with villagers staging protests demanding strict action.Fadnavis said he has spoken to the victim's family and assured them of full support. He said the government is committed to completing the trial in record time and securing the harshest punishment under the law.The Chief Minister added that while public anger is understandable in such cases, justice must follow legal procedures in a democracy. He assured that the investigation will be thorough and strong, leaving no room for loopholes that could weaken the case.The incident has also drawn criticism from opposition leaders over law and order in the state. Responding to this, Fadnavis said it is the Opposition's role to question the government, but added that those who failed earlier should also reflect on their own record.

QUICK READ

Boy shot dead after refusing to fetch water

Kasganj

A nine-year-old boy was shot dead after refusing to fetch water for a relative during a naming ceremony in Uttar Pradesh's Kasganj district, police said. The incident occurred on Friday in Yakutganj village, where the child, Yashpal alias Yash, was attending a family function. Police said the accused, Dhanesh Yadav, allegedly under the influence of alcohol, became angry when the boy refused his request and shot him in the stomach. The child succumbed to his injuries.

2015 inspector murder accused gets 10-yr RI

Lucknow

A special CBI court in Lucknow has convicted an accused in the 2015 killing of a police inspector in Uttar Pradesh and sentenced him to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment. The court found Jishan Khan guilty in the culpable homicide of Inspector Anil Kumar, then SHO in Pratapgarh, and also imposed a fine of Rs 9,000.

Assembly polls: 'BJP confident of Bengal sweep'

State BJP president expresses confidence of victory, citing public anger against ruling party and organisational unity

KOLKATA

Bengal BJP president Samik Bhattacharya struck a calm and confident note ahead of the Assembly election results, saying his party is heading towards a decisive mandate due to public dissatisfaction with the ruling Trinamool Congress. Speaking over the phone on Saturday night, he appeared relaxed after weeks of campaigning, even as tensions remained high following polling.Allegations of EVM tampering, repolling in some constituencies, and protests by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee have kept the political atmosphere tense. Bhattacharya dismissed these concerns, saying the election reflects a "clear rejection" of the ruling party.He pointed to issues such as teacher recruitment scams and rising unemployment, which he said have weakened the government's credibility. Bhattacharya's

confidence also follows his efforts to stabilise a divided state BJP unit after taking charge, when internal differences among leaders were widely reported.A seasoned organisational figure, Bhattacharya rose through party ranks as a spokesperson and later became a Rajya Sabha member in 2024. His appointment as state chief had drawn criticism from Trinamool leaders, including Kunal Ghosh, who questioned his ability to unify factions led by Sukanta Majumdar, Suvendu Adhikari, and Dilip Ghosh.With results approaching, exit polls suggest a strong BJP performance, possibly surpassing its 2021 tally. Bhattacharya said the party focused on strengthening booth-level presence and teamwork.Though not contesting, he played a key campaign role alongside Suvendu Adhikari, while national leaders like Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, and Nitin Nabin led efforts from the Centre. He expressed optimism that the BJP could cross 200 seats, calling it a historic moment for the party in West Bengal.

'MPs who switched to BJP targeted': Chadha to meet Prez

NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu has granted an appointment to BJP MP Raghav Chadha on May 5, following his request to raise concerns over the alleged misuse of state machinery in Punjab for political vendetta, sources said. Chadha is expected to inform the President about actions targeting MPs who recently left the Aam Aadmi Party and joined the Bharatiya Janata Party. Chadha, along with MPs Sandeep Pathak and Ashok Mittal, had switched to the BJP last month. Several others, including Harbhajan Singh, Rajinder Gupta, Vikramjit Singh Sahney and Swati Maliwal, also joined the party. Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann is also scheduled to meet the President on the same day, calling it an important step to protect democratic values in the state.The development comes amid controversy after Punjab police filed two non-bailable FIRs against Rajya Sabha MP Sandeep Pathak in separate districts. The BJP and the Shiromani Akali Dal have questioned the timing, alleging political vendetta.

Notably, Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann is also scheduled to meet with President Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on May 5

Punjab BJP working president Ashwani Sharma accused the state government of using the police to silence opposition voices. He claimed the

move reflects fear within the leadership, including Arvind Kejriwal, and warned against what he described as misuse of law for political purposes.Akali Dal leader Bikram Singh Majithia also alleged selective targeting of leaders who left the AAP. The issue has intensified political tensions in Punjab, with opposition parties accusing the state

Passenger jumps off moving plane

CHENNAI

A shocking security incident occurred at Chennai International Airport early Monday after a passenger on an Air Arabia flight from Sharjah opened an emergency exit and jumped from a moving aircraft while it was taxiing to the parking bay.According to officials, the aircraft had safely landed and was moving slowly toward its designated stand when the passenger suddenly activated the emergency exit door. Before the cabin crew could react, the individual jumped onto the tarmac and attempted to run across the restricted runway area. Airport security personnel immediately spotted the passenger and chased him across the airfield.

CPI hits streets against commercial LPG price hike

CHENNAI

The Communist Party of India (CPI) on Sunday staged a protest in Chennai, demanding an immediate rollback of the recent hike in commercial LPG cylinder prices, saying it has badly affected small businesses and street food vendors.

Led by CPI South Chennai District Secretary S K Siva, party workers gathered near Panagal Building in Saidapet and raised slogans against the BJP-led Union government. Addressing the protest, Siva said the sharp increase in gas prices has forced many small restaurants and roadside eateries to shut down, impacting the livelihoods of thousands of workers. He added that the rise in prices is also affecting students, IT professionals, and daily wage earners who depend on affordable eateries for regular meals, especially those staying in hostels. According to him, the hike has created a wider impact on everyday life.

Siva criticised the Centre for linking the price rise to global issues, including tensions involving Israel and Iran. He alleged that the government is prioritising international interests over the needs of common people and urged it to reduce taxes to ease the burden.

He also claimed that the price hike was introduced after elections in several states, as earlier predicted by the party. The CPI demanded that the Centre convene a joint parliamentary session to discuss the rising cost of living and warned of intensified protests if the decision is not reversed.

The price of commercial LPG cylinders was increased by Rs 993 per 19-kg cylinder on Friday, marking the third consecutive monthly hike amid rising global energy costs linked to the West Asia conflict.

Man dragged on car bonnet for 2 km after road rage

HYDERABAD

A middle-aged man was allegedly dragged on the bonnet of a moving car for nearly 2 kilometres in Meerpet, Telangana, after a dispute over taking a turn, police said on Sunday. A case has been registered and investigation is underway.According to police, the incident took place on the night of May 1 when the man and his son were travelling on a two-wheeler. The son was riding the bike, while a car was moving in the same direction on the road.The issue began when the bike rider signalled for a U-turn around 500 metres ahead. The car driver questioned him for signalling so early, which led to a heated argument between them.Police said the argument quickly escalated. The car driver allegedly grabbed the bike rider's hair and continued driving for a short distance. In an attempt to stop the vehicle, the rider's father held onto the bonnet of the moving car.Despite this, the driver allegedly kept driving with the man clinging to the bonnet for about 2 kilometres before finally stopping the vehicle near Balapur. The driver then reportedly fled the spot.A video of the incident, which later surfaced, shows the man holding onto the bonnet of the moving car as it travels on the road.

DMK flags security concerns ahead of counting

CHENNAI

The ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) on Sunday alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) may attempt to create disruptions during the vote counting process on May 4 and urged authorities to take immediate action.

In a letter to Tamil Nadu Chief Electoral Officer Archana Patnaik, DMK Organisation Secretary R S Bharathi said the party had received "credible information" about possible plans to disturb counting centres and nearby sensitive locations, including party offices.

He warned that such incidents could lead to serious law and order issues and affect the fairness of the electoral process.

The letter, also sent to the state police chief, called for strong security arrangements and close coordination with law enforcement agencies.

The DMK requested officials to take all necessary steps to ensure peace, maintain public order, and protect the integrity of the counting

process across the state.

It stressed that timely preventive measures are essential to avoid any untoward incidents and to maintain public trust in the democratic system.

Parties gear up for celebrations ahead of Kerala poll results

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

With the Kerala Assembly election results scheduled for Monday, political parties across the state have begun preparations for celebrations, including large-scale food arrangements and cultural events.

In Pandikkad of Malappuram district, workers of the Indian National Congress and the United Democratic Front (UDF) are preparing biryani for nearly 5,000 people.

Party workers have set up a large tent where food will be distributed after the results.

Congress leaders said they are expecting a strong performance and are confident of ending 10 years of rule by the Left Democratic Front (LDF). A party worker said the celebrations will also include cultural programmes and open participation, welcoming even rival party workers.

The cooking arrangements are extensive, with 16 large vessels being used and about 40 kilograms of rice per pot. Local leaders said Malappuram has traditionally been a strong support base for the UDF and they expect the trend to continue.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has also begun preparations for celebrations in Kochi.

The party has ordered large quantities of laddoos and arranged placards featuring candidates they expect to win in various constituencies.

Although the BJP and its National Democratic Alliance (NDA) currently do not hold any seats in the Kerala Assembly, party leaders said they are hopeful of opening their account this time. They claimed that voters are dissatisfied with both the LDF and UDF.A BJP leader said the party expects victories in several constituencies, including Nemom, Kazhakootam, Manjeshwar, Palakkad, and Thiruvalla.With enthusiasm building across party camps, Kerala is set for a lively and closely watched result day, with each party hopeful of a favourable mandate from voters.

Dhami hears public grievances in Dehradun

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Sunday conducted a public grievance hearing at the Chief Sevak Sadan in the Chief Minister's residence, where he listened to issues raised by citizens from across the state.During the hearing, film actress Himani Shivpuri also met the Chief Minister and praised the arrangements made for pilgrims during the Char Dham Yatra.

She appreciated the improved management and efforts taken by the administration for smoother travel of devotees.Several citizens attended the session and raised concerns related to roads, drinking water, electricity, healthcare, education, and land-related matters. Anganwadi workers also expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister after receiving assurance on their demands and issues.

THE SPECIAL OFFICER AND COMPETENT AUTHORITY,
(UNDER KPIDFE - IMA & OTHER SCAM)
3rd Floor, Podium Block, V.V Tower, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001

NOTICE/INVITATION FOR E-AUCTION FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Pursuant to attachment of Immovable properties by the Government under the provisions of the Karnataka Protection of Interest of Depositors in Financial Establishments Act, 2004 (KPIDFE Act) and pursuant to the absolute attachment order by the Hon'ble Special Court, the Special Officer & Competent Authority is issuing notice for e-auction of the immovable property through e-auction on 'as is where is and whatever there is basis'. The intending bidders will be required to furnish Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (as mentioned against each auction in the e-portal provided by the Service Provider/Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only).

Short description of the Immovable Property (SPLOCA/AUC(2)/CR/19/2025-26)

Properties are free of all encumbrances and are in the name of Competent Authority appointed by Government and confirmed by the Special Court under KPIDFE Act, 2004 and Hon'ble High Court Of Karnataka has cleared the title (Khata stands in the name of Competent Authority and Auctioning Authority)

Sl. No.	DETAILS OF THE SCHEDULE PROPERTY (Clear Title by Court in order No. MISC No. 711/2019, 712/2019, 713/2019)	Minimum Bid Price (Rs)	EMD (Rs)	Bid Increase Value (Rs)
1.	Vacant Site bearing No.403, Old Khata No.503/165C Ward No.33, New Khata No.33-03-13-363B at Hassan City, Tannerhalla Circle, Tannerhalla Main Road, Hassan, Total Agr.928.6070 sq.mt (9996 sq.ft). Vacant Site bearing No.404, Old Khata No.503/165B Ward No.33, New Khata No.33-03-13-363A at Hassan City, Tannerhalla Circle, Tannerhalla Main Road, Hassan, Total Agr.654.04 sq.mt.. Vacant Site bearing No.405, Old Khata No.503/165D Ward No.33, New Khata No.33-03-13-365A at Hassan City, Tannerhalla Circle, Tannerhalla Main Road, Hassan, Total Agr.290.6018 sq.mt. (3128 sq.ft). Google Map link: https://maps.app.goo.gl/9uioKWQ221xttdco9 Latitude and Longitude: 12°59'44.0"N 76°04'54.0"E	17,23,34,655/-	1,72,34,000/-	17,24,000/-

Date of Pre-bid meeting & time and Place	Date of Inspection & time	Last Date of Submission of Bids & EMD submission	Date & Time of E Auction
14th May 2026, 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm Place: O/o SPLOCA, 3rd Floor Podium Block, Visveswariah Tower, Bengaluru-	20th May 2026 11:00am to 01:00 pm	26th May 2026 Before 5.00 pm	29th May 2026 11 am to 1 pm

For Registration & Online Auction, you can login to: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** (Helpdesk No: 080-46010000, 080-68948777) The interested bidders who require auction related information can contact Assistant Commissioner, Office of the Special Officer & Competent Authority, 3rd Floor, Podium Block, Visveswariah Towers, Dr.Ambedkar Veedi, Bengaluru-560001, e-mail ID: splocaeauction@gmail.com or Contact Mob. No 9945515174.

Date: 30.04.2026
Place: Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/466/NR/2026-27

Sd/-
Special Officer & Competent Authority
(IMA & Other Scam) Bengaluru.

RAIN-FURY ALERT

IMD predicts thunderstorms, winds across AP

AMARAVATI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast thunderstorms, rainfall, and gusty winds across Andhra Pradesh over the next five days, bringing likely relief from the intense heatwave conditions in the state.Temperatures have been crossing 44 degrees Celsius in several areas, making weather conditions uncomfortable. According to the Meteorological Centre in Amaravati, thunderstorms with lightning are expected at isolated places over Coastal Andhra Pradesh,

Yanam, and Rayalaseema starting May 3.The IMD said the state will witness a mix of weather conditions, including heavy rainfall, gusty winds, and hot and humid conditions during this period. Wind speeds may reach up to 60 kmph in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, while Rayalaseema may experience winds of up to 40 kmph.Similar weather is expected on May 4, with thunderstorms and lightning likely to continue across the same regions. On May 5 and 6, heavy rainfall is predicted in parts of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam, along with thunderstorms and winds of up to 50 kmph.During this period, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema may also see gusty winds of around 40 kmph at isolated places. On May 7, thunderstorm activity with lightning is expected to continue across Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, and Rayalaseema, along with strong winds.

QUICK READ

Russia, Ukraine dispute over Myropillia control

Moscow

Russia and Ukraine have given conflicting claims over control of Myropillia village in the Sumy region. Russia's Defence Ministry said its forces captured the village using ground units and drone support, claiming Ukrainian forces were pushed out. However, Ukraine's military rejected the claim, calling it false and insisting its troops remain in control. Ukrainian officials also said there had been no recent assault attempts in the area near the border.

Press freedom violations on rise in Afghan

Kabul

At least 150 press freedom violations were reported in Afghanistan over the past year, according to the Afghanistan Journalists Center. The report, covering May 2025 to April 2026, highlights worsening conditions for journalists. It said 127 cases involved threats, while 20 were detentions, with four journalists still in custody. Released on World Press Freedom Day, the report noted rising censorship and pressure. It also said two state media workers were killed and one injured during Pakistani airstrikes.

Nearly 900 pilots quit S. Korean Air Force

Seoul

Nearly 900 South Korean Air Force pilots left service over the past decade for better-paying airline jobs, official data showed Sunday. A report submitted to lawmaker Kang Dae-sik said 896 skilled pilots resigned between 2017 and March 2026. These pilots had 8 to 17 years of experience and were capable of independent missions and training juniors. Among them, 730 were fighter pilots, 148 cargo pilots, and 18 helicopter pilots. Most later joined major airlines, while others moved to low-cost carriers.

Philippines moves to expel Chinese research vessels

Manila

The Philippines plans to deploy aircraft and ships to push out Chinese research vessels spotted in its claimed waters, raising fresh concerns over maritime security.The Philippine Coast Guard said it detected four Chinese vessels operating without permission, including the advanced drone carrier Zhuhaiyun. Officials believe the ships were conducting marine research without approval, violating international law under UNCLOS.PCG spokesperson Jay Tarriela said the vessels were tracked using Canada's Dark Vessel Detection system. The Zhuhaiyun, capable of deploying dozens of unmanned systems for ocean surveys, was seen near the Spratly Islands. Other vessels identified include Xiangyanghong 33, Shi Yan 1, and Jia Geng, all equipped for deep-sea research. Philippine authorities said such activities cannot be allowed without consent.PCG Commandant Ronnie Gil Gavan said the country would act firmly to protect its maritime rights and sovereignty.

Reviewing fresh Iran proposal, can resume strikes: Trump

Trump doubts Iran proposal, reports suggest phased talks plan; ceasefire holds, strike plans reviewed amid fuel price pressure

WASHINGTON

Trump said the United States is studying a fresh proposal from Iran aimed at ending the currently paused war, but expressed doubts about reaching an agreement.

Speaking while travelling from Palm Beach to Miami, he said Iran had not paid a sufficient price for its actions over the past several decades.

He warned that military action could resume if Iran "misbehaves" or takes any aggressive steps, though he added that no immediate decision has been made. Trump said he was reviewing the proposal during his flight and would provide more details later, although a planned media interaction in Miami was later cancelled.

In a social media post, Trump again questioned whether the proposal would be acceptable, repeating his view that Iran's past actions have not been adequately addressed. So far, no official details of the proposal have been publicly confirmed.

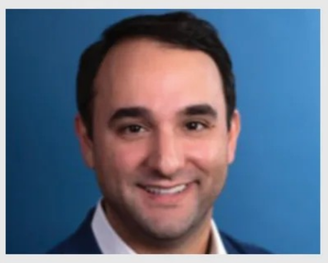
The proposal outlines a one-month period for negotiations to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, lift the US naval blockade, and formally end the conflict in Iran and Lebanon. A second phase of talks could then focus on resolving issues related to Iran's nuclear programme.

Trump had earlier rejected another proposal from Iran this week, calling it unsatisfactory. However, discussions have continued, and a three-week ceasefire between the sides appears to be holding for now.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump was briefed by Adm. Brad Cooper on updated Iran strike plans. He also faces pressure from rising fuel prices, saying costs may drop after the war, while the naval blockade continues.

White House names adviser for Iran peace talks

WASHINGTON



The White House has appointed Nick Stewart as an adviser to the diplomatic team working to end the conflict with Iran. Officials said Stewart will support the delegation led by Special Envoy Steve Witkoff.

White House spokeswoman Olivia Wales described him as an experienced expert with strong knowledge of Iran-related issues.

Stewart has previously worked at the US State Department and on Capitol Hill. His appointment was reportedly facilitated by Jared Kushner. Before joining the team, he was linked to the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

The move comes as Iran has submitted a 14-point proposal to counter a US-backed peace plan. Reports say the proposal outlines steps to end the conflict and move toward a permanent settlement. It was reportedly shared through mediators and calls for resolving key issues within 30 days instead of a longer ceasefire.

Iran's plan includes demands such as lifting sanctions, ending naval blockades, releasing frozen assets, and ensuring no future military action. It also suggests managing the Strait of Hormuz to maintain stable oil supplies.

Trump said he would review the proposal but expressed doubts about Iran's intentions.

MIDEAST CRISIS PUSHES PAK INTO INFLATION SCARE

KARACHI

Pakistan's fragile economy faces rising inflation and slower growth as global oil prices surge due to the ongoing Middle East conflict.Pakistan's economy is likely to remain under pressure with high inflation if global oil prices continue to rise. A report by Topline Securities Ltd, cited by Dawn, warns that increasing energy costs and import restrictions are straining the country's financial stability.The report estimates inflation could average between 9 and 10 per cent over the next year, with figures possibly crossing 11 per cent later. It noted that every 10 □□□□ increase in oil prices adds to inflation, and if prices reach 120 dollars per barrel, inflation could rise further. This may force the State Bank of Pakistan to increase interest rates.Economic growth is also expected to slow. The GDP growth forecast for FY27 has been reduced to 2.5–3 per cent, down from earlier estimates of 4 per cent. The industrial sector may see a sharp slowdown, reflecting the wider economic stress.Pakistan's current account deficit could exceed 8 billion dollars if imports are not controlled. This would further reduce foreign exchange reserves. The fiscal deficit is also expected to remain high, exceeding targets set by the International Monetary Fund.The Pakistan Stock Exchange has dropped sharply due to heavy energy imports. With remittances and exports expected to fall and the currency weakening, analysts warn prolonged conflict could worsen inflation, slow growth, and increase financial pressure.

China blocks US sanctions on domestic refiners

BEIJING

China has issued a legal order to stop US sanctions on its refiners, calling the move a defence of sovereignty and lawful trade.

The Chinese government has taken formal steps to block sanctions imposed by the US Department of the Treasury on several domestic oil refiners accused of buying Iranian crude.

The action targets firms including Hengli Petrochemical and others placed on the US sanctions list.China's Commerce Ministry said the US measures, such as asset freezes and trade restrictions, violate international law and disrupt normal business activities.

The move marks the first use of China's "blocking statute," a legal tool designed to counter foreign laws applied beyond their borders. Experts described the response as "defensive and justified," arguing that the sanctions lack approval from the US.

Iran slams Trump's 'piracy' remark over vessel seizures

TEHRAN

Iran has strongly criticised comments by US President Donald Trump regarding the seizure of Iranian vessels, calling them a clear admission of illegal actions.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei said Trump's remarks describing US actions as "piracy" were serious and deliberate. He stated that the comments were not accidental but showed the unlawful nature of US operations against international maritime navigation.

Trump had earlier said the US Navy acted "like pirates" while enforcing a blockade on Iranian ports, claiming control over ships, cargo, and oil. Iran rejected these statements and urged the global community, including the United Nations, to condemn what it called violations of international law.The tensions come after the United States imposed a blockade in the Strait of Hormuz following failed talks with Iran. The negotiations, held in Islamabad, did not produce an agreement despite a ceasefire announced earlier.

The ceasefire began after weeks of conflict involving Iran, the United States, and Israel. The fighting caused significant damage and loss of life, including key Iranian leaders and civilians.In response, Iran launched missile and drone attacks on targets linked to the US and Israel. It also tightened control over the Strait of Hormuz, restricting movement of vessels connected to both countries.The situation remains tense, with both sides exchanging strong statements and maintaining pressure in the region.

UN chief warns as global press freedom falls

NEW YORK

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has raised serious concerns over growing threats to journalists, saying the world is witnessing an alarming decline in press freedom.

Speaking on World Press Freedom Day, he stressed that without a free and independent media, peace, human rights, and development cannot survive.

Guterres said journalists are increasingly facing censorship, surveillance, legal pressure, and even violence. He noted that many are deliberately targeted, especially in conflict zones, while a large number of crimes against them remain unpunished.

According to him, about 85 per cent of such crimes go without proper investigation, creating what he called "unacceptable impunity."He warned that when reliable information is restricted, public trust weakens and societies become more divided. He added that limiting press freedom makes it harder to prevent and resolve crises.

A recent report by Reporters Without Borders shows that global press freedom has dropped to its lowest level in 25 years. More than half of the 180 countries studied are now classified as having "difficult" or "very serious" conditions for journalism.The report found that only a very small portion of the world's population lives in countries with a "good" environment for media.

The report says very few people live in countries with a safe media environment, citing political pressure, poor funding, and restrictive laws as key reasons for the decline

It blamed political pressure, weak financial conditions of media organisations, and restrictive laws for the decline. Conflict zones remain especially dangerous for journalists, with several countries witnessing high risks and casualties. The report also noted shifts in global rankings, with some nations improving while others declined.Guterres urged governments worldwide to protect journalists and ensure they can work safely.

Pak Oppn slams govt over economy, media curbs

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's opposition has sharply criticised the government, accusing it of economic mismanagement and increasing pressure on media freedom.

Leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf and its allies launched a strong attack on the federal administration, calling its performance "incompetent" and harmful to the public. According to a report by Dawn, opposition leaders highlighted rising inflation and restrictions on press freedom as major concerns.

PTI leader Sheikh Waqas Akram said inflation has crossed projections, making essentials like fuel, food, and transport unaffordable. He blamed government policies for worsening the crisis and rejected claims that global factors alone are responsible. The party demanded immediate steps, including reducing fuel taxes to ease the burden on citizens.The opposition also raised concerns about media freedom, citing findings from Reporters Without Borders. It alleged growing censorship, pressure on journalists, and misuse of laws to silence criticism, calling such actions harmful to democracy. Criticism extended to governance issues, including alleged selective actions in anti-encroachment drives and poor healthcare management in Sindh. PTI leaders claimed gaps in administration have left communities vulnerable to diseases.

Indian Navy chief begins four-day Myanmar visit

NAYPYIDAW

India's naval chief has stepped up engagement with Myanmar, focusing on maritime security, defence cooperation, and strengthening strategic ties in the region.

Chief of Naval Staff Dinesh K Tripathi is on a three-day visit to Myanmar to boost naval cooperation and review ongoing defence partnerships. During the visit, he boarded Myanmar Navy's frigate UMS Kyan Sit Thar and was welcomed with a ceremonial Guard of Honour by senior naval officials.

The visit allowed the Indian Navy Chief to understand Myanmar's shipbuilding capabilities and fleet strength. Officials said discussions focused on improving coordination between the two navies and enhancing maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.

Both sides also explored ways to expand bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including training, joint exercises, and operational coordination. The visit is part of India's broader effort to strengthen its presence in the Bay of Bengal and surrounding areas.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the trip aims to review existing cooperation, improve operational links, and identify new areas of partnership. Admiral Tripathi is also scheduled to meet Myanmar's top military leaders, including General Ye Win Oo, Defence Minister U Htun Aung, and Navy Chief Admiral Htein Win.

Talks are expected to focus on capacity building, training, and enhancing defence capabilities. The visit also includes stops at key naval commands and a tribute at the national war memorial.

Myanmar plays an important role in India's regional strategy, especially under its Act East policy. Regular naval engagements between the two countries include joint exercises, coordinated patrols, and training exchanges.

5 Baloch men 'disappeared' after Pak raids

BALOCHISTAN

At least five Baloch men were reportedly forcibly disappeared in separate incidents across Balochistan and Punjab, raising fresh concerns over human rights violations.According to a report by The Balochistan Post, the cases involved detentions by security personnel, with families saying the men were taken to unknown locations. In Gwadar district, a man named Sakhi was picked up on April 27 while working at a petrol pump in Ormara.

'VIOLENT EXTREMIST THREAT'

Canada flags Khalistani elements as security threat

OTTAWA

Canada's intelligence agency has warned that a small group of extremists linked to Khalistani ideology pose a potential security risk.

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service, in its latest report, described some Canada-based Khalistani extremists as a "violent extremist threat." It said these individuals continue to use the country to promote activities, raise funds, and support violence, even though no such attacks were reported domestically last year.

According to the report, these groups exploit community networks to collect funds that may be used for extremist purposes. CSIS warned that their involvement in politically motivated violence remains a concern for national security.

The report also highlighted growing foreign interference in Canada's internal affairs. It named countries such as China, Russia, Iran, and Pakistan as key actors using different methods to influence politics and public opinion.

It said China has adopted new tactics, including recruiting individuals through front companies. Russia was accused of spreading disinformation to deepen social divisions, while Iran was linked to efforts targeting opponents abroad. Pakistan was also mentioned for alleged covert influence through networks in media and society.

The report stressed that such activities could weaken democratic systems and public trust. It called for stronger action, including better monitoring of foreign funding, tougher enforcement against illegal activities, and greater transparency.

Officials urged political leaders to take a firm stand against extremism and foreign interference. The report concluded that stronger measures are needed to protect Canada's security and democratic institutions from evolving threats.

QUICK READ

Over 400 Korean firms cross $680 million market cap

Seoul

The number of South Korean listed companies exceeding 1 trillion won market capitalisation has crossed 400 for the first time this year, according to data from the Korea Exchange. 405 firms reached this level, including 267 on KOSPI, 137 on KOSDAQ, and one on KONEX. Seventy-nine companies also surpassed 10 trillion won in valuation amid a strong stock market recovery driven by artificial intelligence optimism. The rally follows a rebound in sentiment after geopolitical tensions, with the benchmark KOSPI rising sharply in recent trading. Market gains were also supported by global participation, including South Korea's participation in the Offshore Technology Conference 2026 in Houston through KOTRA.

India growth above 7% despite conflict outlook

New Delhi

India's economy is expected to grow above seven per cent in the near term despite geopolitical tensions in West Asia, Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran said. He noted that crude oil supply risks are being closely monitored, while higher import costs and weaker remittances could widen the current account deficit to around two per cent of GDP in FY27. Gross FDI inflows are projected at $90–95 billion in FY26. Inflation pressures remain manageable but weather risks persist. Nageswaran also said private investment has lagged corporate profits even as deregulation has progressed, with nearly 86 per cent of reform targets already achieved across key sectors nationwide.

'Mobile money hits $2 trillion global milestone'

This growth is fueled by increased user activity and a shift towards everyday merchant payments, which saw a 42% rise

NEW DELHI

Global mobile money transactions have crossed the $2 trillion mark in 2025, doubling in value over the past four years as digital payments continue to expand rapidly worldwide, according to a new industry report.

The growth reflects a sharp rise in usage rather than just new users, with more people relying on mobile wallets for everyday payments, merchant transactions, and financial services. The sector previously took nearly two decades to reach the first $1 trillion, but only four years to double that value, highlighting accelerating adoption of digital finance systems.

The expansion has been driven by increased smartphone penetration, wider financial inclusion, and the growing integration of mobile wallets with banking systems. Merchant payments have emerged as the fastest-growing use case, while services such as savings, insurance, and bank transfers are also expanding within mobile platforms.

The report notes that over 2.3 billion mobile money accounts are now registered globally, with hundreds of millions actively using services each month. This trend is especially strong in emerging economies, where mobile money often serves as a primary financial tool.

Despite strong growth, challenges remain, including regulatory hurdles, fraud risks, and a persistent gender gap in account ownership. However, analysts say the sector is becoming more mature, with improved profitability and broader financial ecosystem integration.

Overall, mobile money is reshaping global payments by reducing cash dependence and enabling faster, more accessible financial transactions across both developed and developing markets.

South Korean banks see $2 bn loan losses

SEOUL

South Korean banks reported $2 billion in unrecoverable loans in Q1 as high interest rates and real estate stress increased defaults across major lenders.

Some 3 trillion won (around $2 billion) worth of loans extended by major South Korean banks were classified as "estimated loss" in the first quarter, according to financial sector data released on Sunday in Seoul.

The data covers four major lenders — KB Financial Group, Shinhan Financial Group, Hana Financial Group, and Woori Financial Group. Together, they reported 2.9 trillion won in loans deemed largely unrecoverable as of March end, up 5.8% year-on-year.

In banking terms, "estimated loss" is the worst asset quality category, indicating loans with almost no chance of recovery. South Korean banks classify loans into five stages, ranging from normal to estimated loss.

Officials attributed the rise in bad loans to high interest rates, which have weakened repayment capacity among self-employed borrowers and small and medium enterprises. Many of these loans were taken during periods of lower interest rates, making them harder to service in the current environment.

Market observers also pointed to external pressures, including global energy price shocks linked to geopolitical tensions in West Asia. Higher oil prices and inflation have added strain to the real estate sector, leading to increased defaults in project financing loans.

Among lenders, KB Financial Group and Hana Financial Group reported sharp increases in non-performing exposures, while Shinhan Financial Group saw a decline in estimated losses compared to last year. Woori Financial Group also recorded a moderate rise.

The overall trend highlights growing stress in South Korea's credit environment amid tight monetary conditions and weaker economic momentum.

FACT-FILE

- South Korean banks face loan losses
- $2 billion loans deemed unrecoverable
- High interest rates hurt borrowers' repayment
- SME real estate defaults increase sharply
- KB, Hana report rising bad loans

India's services sector has boosted exports strongly, offsetting 64% of the trade deficit in FY26, Finance Ministry noted.

Services exports hit $418.3B, offset 64% of trade deficit

NEW DELHI

India's services sector has emerged as a key driver of external trade resilience, offsetting nearly 64% of the country's merchandise trade deficit in FY26, according to the Finance Ministry's latest monthly economic review.

The report shows that services exports grew strongly by 7.9% year-on-year, crossing the $400 billion mark for the first time and reaching about $418.3 billion. This performance highlights sustained global demand for India's IT, business, and digitally delivered services, which continue to anchor the country's export earnings.

A key highlight is the rising share of services in India's total exports, which increased to 48.6% in FY26 from 47% in the previous year. This signals a gradual structural shift in India's trade profile, moving from goods-heavy exports toward a more services-driven model.

The strong surplus generated by services has played a stabilising role in the external sector. The Finance Ministry noted that the net services surplus stood at around $213.9 billion, which helped offset 64.2% of the merchandise trade deficit during the year.

Despite this cushioning effect, the overall trade deficit still widened due to higher import demand and global uncertainties. However, officials say the services sector continues to act as a critical buffer, reducing vulnerability to external shocks such as commodity price fluctuations and geopolitical disruptions.

Overall, the data underlines the growing importance of India's services economy in supporting trade balance and strengthening macroeconomic stability.

OPEC+ set to agree third oil output quota hike

NEW DELHI

OVERVIEW

- OPEC+ agrees modest output hike
- Hormuz blockade disrupts global oil supply
- Kuwait exports halted amid force majeure
- UAE exits OPEC+ production coordination
- Crude prices remain highly volatile globally

The OPEC+ has agreed in principle to raise oil output targets in June, even as geopolitical tensions in West Asia continue to disrupt global energy flows.

According to reports, seven member countries of OPEC+ will increase production by around 188,000 barrels per day next month. However, analysts say the move is largely symbolic due to disruptions in key shipping routes, particularly the Strait of Hormuz, which remains affected by regional conflict.

The output decision comes amid a broader supply shock that has already reduced crude availability. Combined production from OPEC+ members stood at 35.06 million barrels per day in March, marking a sharp decline from previous levels.

The situation has been further complicated by internal shifts within the alliance. The United Arab Emirates has reportedly stepped away from coordinated OPEC+ production decisions, signalling strategic differences within the group. Iran, another key member, has also seen exports fall due to ongoing restrictions linked to the blockade.

In a major disruption, reports indicated that Kuwait recorded zero crude oil exports in April for the first time since the 1991 Iraq invasion, after declaring force majeure. This effectively halted around 2 million barrels per day of supply.

The crisis has led to volatility in global oil markets. Brent crude and West Texas Intermediate prices initially fell on reports of possible diplomatic talks involving Iran but later rebounded as uncertainty persisted over supply stability and shipping security.

Overall, the combination of production adjustments, geopolitical tensions, and shipping disruptions continues to keep global energy markets highly unstable, with traders closely monitoring developments around the Strait of Hormuz.

Govt eyes ₹35,000 cr push for coal gasification

NEW DELHI

The Union government is set to approve a fresh incentive package worth over 35,000 crore to accelerate coal gasification projects across the country.

The proposal, prepared by the Ministry of Coal, is likely to be taken up by the Union Cabinet this month and will significantly expand the earlier 8,500 crore scheme approved in January 2024.

The new initiative aims to promote large-scale surface coal and lignite gasification, helping India reduce its dependence on imports of LNG, urea, ammonia, and ammonium nitrate. It is also aligned with the government's ambitious goal of achieving 100 million tonnes of coal gasification capacity by 2030, a key component of the country's long-term energy strategy.

The push comes amid ongoing global supply chain disruptions, particularly in LNG and fertiliser inputs, partly due to geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. By boosting domestic production capabilities, the government hopes to enhance energy security and ensure stable supply for critical industries.

Under the previous incentive scheme, selected private companies and public sector undertakings were offered financial support of up to 1,000 crore per project or 15 per cent of capital expenditure, whichever is lower. Several projects have already been awarded incentives, including facilities in Odisha and Maharashtra focused on producing hydrogen, ammonium nitrate, and direct reduced iron.

May 2026 brings crucial TDS, TCS filing deadlines

NEW DELHI

May 2026 brings a series of key tax compliance deadlines for taxpayers, businesses, and financial institutions, requiring timely action to avoid penalties under income tax rules.

The month begins on May 7, when taxpayers must deposit Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) and Tax Collected at Source (TCS) for April. Government offices are also required to credit taxes to the central government on the same day if paid without challan. The deadline also covers declarations under Section 394(2) for certain April transactions.

On May 15, multiple filings are due under the Income-tax Act, including issuance of TDS certificates for March deductions related to property, rent, and professional payments. Government entities must also submit Form 24G, while stock exchanges file reports on client code modifications. Quarterly TCS statements for the period ending March 31 are also due.

By May 30, companies must issue TCS certificates for Q4 of FY 2025–26. Entities involved in film production or notified activities are required to submit annual statements under Section 285B.

The most extensive deadline falls on May 31, covering several major filings. These include TDS returns for the March quarter, annual reporting of financial transactions, and disclosure of reportable accounts by financial institutions in Form 61B. Specified entities must also file statements of financial transactions in Form 61A.

Experts say strict adherence to these deadlines is essential for compliance and avoiding penalties under tax regulations.

DATES NOT TO BE MISSED

- May brings key tax deadlines
- TDS, TCS deposits due May 7
- Multiple filings scheduled for May 15
- Annual returns and statements due May 31
- Businesses urged timely compliance to avoid penalties

Top 10 firms add Rs 2.20 lakh cr in value

MUMBAI

The combined market valuation of four of India's top-10 most valued companies rose by 2.20 lakh crore in a holiday-shortened trading week, driven by strong gains in heavyweight stocks. The benchmark BSE Sensex ended slightly higher, gaining 249.29 points or 0.32%, reflecting cautious optimism in the market.

Among the top gainers, Bharti Airtel led the rally with a rise of 43,503.51 crore, taking its total valuation to 11,49,222.13 crore. Tata Consultancy Services added 27,569.83 crore, pushing its market cap to 8,94,933.95 crore. Bajaj Finance also gained 9,432.32 crore, ending the week at 5,83,123.13 crore.

However, banking and financial stocks witnessed profit booking and selling pressure. ICICI Bank recorded the steepest fall, losing 45,364.62 crore in valuation to 9,04,980.78 crore. State Bank of India followed with a decline of 30,922.57 crore, while HDFC Bank slipped by 20,951.31 crore.

FMCG major Hindustan Unilever also saw a decline of 18,420.79 crore. Insurance giant Life Insurance Corporation of India and infrastructure player Larsen & Toubro posted marginal losses during the week. Despite mixed trends across sectors, Reliance Industries retained its position as India's most valued firm. Market experts said the Nifty faces strong resistance in the 24,300–24,400 range, while 23,800 remains a key support level, indicating a cautious but range-bound outlook in the near term.

AIRLINE COST PRESSURE

Cong slams Centre over Air India global op cuts

NEW DELHI

The Indian National Congress on Sunday criticised the Centre following reports that Air India may scale back its international operations until July, calling the situation a case of "gross mismanagement" and accusing the government of neglecting long-term economic priorities.

In a post on social media platform X, the opposition party said it was alarming that one of India's largest airlines could be forced to cut global services for months. It alleged that the government was more focused on electoral gains than safeguarding the country's economic future.

"The amount of mismanagement of our country is so gross. Imagine India's second biggest carrier shutting down international flights for next few months," the party said, adding that such developments could damage India's global prospects.

The remarks came after internal indications from Air India suggested that some international flights had already been reduced in April and May, with further cuts likely in June and July.

According to reports, Air India CEO Campbell Wilson cited a sharp rise in jet fuel prices, along with airspace restrictions and longer flying routes, as key factors making several international routes financially unviable. He described the situation as "extremely challenging" for the airline.

To manage rising costs, the airline has increased fares and added fuel surcharges. However, it noted limited scope for further hikes, as higher ticket prices could reduce demand and impact passenger bookings.

ROUNDUP

- Congress slams Centre over airline cuts
- Air India reduces international flights till July
- Rising jet fuel prices hit operations
- Airspace issues increase costs, routes longer
- Fare hikes limited due to demand concerns

WAR AND ITS EFFECT ON WORLD TRADE

Trade is the lifeblood of the modern world economy. It connects nations, fuels growth, lifts populations out of poverty, and binds societies together through mutual dependence. Yet throughout history, one force has repeatedly torn these connections apart: war. From ancient conflicts that severed the Silk Road to modern geopolitical standoffs that redraw global supply chains overnight, warfare has consistently proven to be one of the most destabilizing forces in international commerce. Understanding how war affects world trade is not merely an academic exercise, it is essential for grasping why peace is not just a moral imperative but an economic one.

The Direct Disruption of Trade Routes

The most immediate and visible impact of war on world trade is the physical destruction of trade infrastructure. Ports, roads, railways, bridges, and airports the arteries through which goods flow become targets in wartime. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the Black Sea, one of the world's most critical grain-export corridors, became a theatre of military blockade. Ukraine, responsible for roughly 10% of global wheat exports and significant shares of sunflower oil and corn, found its ports blockaded and its merchant vessels unable to sail freely. The resulting disruption sent food prices soaring across Africa and the Middle East, demonstrating how a regional conflict can trigger a global supply shock within weeks. Historically, similar patterns emerge with stark regularity. During World War I, German U-boat campaigns in the Atlantic disrupted Allied shipping so severely that Britain, heavily dependent on food imports, faced genuine fears of famine. During World War II, entire oceans were militarized, turning the Pacific and Atlantic into hostile territories for commercial vessels. The war didn't just disrupt trade it virtually halted it between belligerent nations and reshaped the remaining trade into state-controlled logistical operations serving military needs rather than civilian commerce.

Commodity Markets and Price Volatility

War's impact on commodity markets is perhaps its most universally felt economic consequence. Modern economies depend on a small number of critical commodities; oil, natural gas, grains, rare earth metals, semiconductors that are often concentrated in geographically volatile regions. When war threatens or disrupts supply from these regions, the consequences for global trade are immediate and severe.

Oil remains the most politically sensitive commodity. The Persian Gulf, through which a significant portion of global crude oil transits, has been a flashpoint for conflict repeatedly the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, the Gulf War of 1991, and ongoing tensions involving Iran and Saudi Arabia. Each escalation sends energy markets into convulsions, raising costs for manufacturers, airlines, shipping companies, and consumers worldwide.

Higher energy prices act as a tax on global trade, making the transportation of goods more expensive and eroding the competitive advantage that open markets are supposed to provide.

The war in Ukraine also brought rare materials into focus. Ukraine is a significant source of neon gas used in semiconductor manufacturing and titanium, essential for aerospace production. The disruption to these supply chains added to existing semiconductor shortages and forced manufacturers to diversify their sourcing, often at considerable cost and delay.

The Collapse of Investment and Credit

War does not just destroy physical infrastructure it destroys the confidence that underpins investment and trade finance. International trade runs on credit: letters of credit, trade insurance, export guarantees, and currency stability. War destabilizes all of these simultaneously.

When conflict breaks out,

political risk surges. Insurers raise premiums or withdraw coverage entirely from affected regions. Banks restrict trade financing in war zones. Currency values collapse as capital flees the Ukrainian hryvnia, the Russian ruble, and the Turkish lira have all experienced severe pressure during periods of military conflict or geopolitical crisis. A collapsing currency makes imports prohibitively expensive and creates chaos for businesses that have contracted in foreign currencies.

Foreign direct investment (FDI), a critical driver of long-term trade integration, evaporates in war zones. Companies that once built factories, established distribution networks, or signed long-term supply agreements in affected regions pull out or freeze expansion plans.

The rebuilding of trade relationships after conflict ends can take decades; Bosnia, Iraq, Libya, and Syria all illustrate how wars leave behind not just physical rubble but shattered commercial ecosystems that struggle to reconnect with global markets.

Supply Chain Fragmentation and Deglobalization

Perhaps the most profound and lasting effect of war on world trade is its tendency to accelerate deglobalization the fragmentation of integrated global supply chains into competing regional or national blocs. This dynamic has been visibly accelerating in the 2020s.

The trade war between the United States and China, intensified by strategic competition that increasingly carries military undertones, has pushed businesses to diversify away from Chinese manufacturing through "friend-shoring" and "near-shoring" strategies. The semiconductor industry, where Taiwan sits at the center of global production while being a potential flashpoint for US-China military confrontation, has prompted massive government investments in domestic chip manufacturing in the United States, Europe, Japan, and South Korea. These investments are explicitly motivated by the fear that war or blockade could cut off access to critical technology.

The Russia-Ukraine war accelerated Europe's recognition that energy dependency on a potential adversary is a strategic vulnerability.

The resulting effort to diversify energy sources, build LNG terminals, and invest in renewables represents a restructuring of energy trade worth hundreds of billions of euros driven not by economics but by the threat of war.

This fragmentation comes at a cost. The efficiency gains of globalization comparative advantage, economies of scale, specialization are partially sacrificed in the name of security. Goods become more expensive. Growth slows.

The post-war liberal trading order, built painstakingly from the ashes of World War II through institutions like the GATT, the WTO, and the IMF, faces its most serious stress test since the Cold War.

Historical Case Studies: Lessons from the Past

History offers sobering lessons about the relationship between war and trade. World War I devastated what had been, up to 1914, a remarkably integrated global economy. European nations traded freely, capital flowed across borders, and goods moved with relative ease. The war shattered this order completely. By 1918, international trade had collapsed, currencies were destabilized, and the global financial system was in ruins. The subsequent interwar period saw the rise of protectionism, competitive devaluations, and the trade-destroying Smoot-Hawley tariffs contributing conditions that deepened the Great Depression and set the stage for World War II.

World War II, while catastrophic in human terms, paradoxically laid the groundwork for an unprecedented era of trade expansion. The architects of the post-war order driven by the conviction that economic interdependence would reduce the incentive for war built the Bretton Woods institutions, negotiated successive rounds of tariff reductions, and created the frameworks through which global trade would grow faster than at any point in human history over the following seventy years. The lesson they drew was clear: trade promotes peace, and peace enables trade.

The Korean War and the Vietnam War, while devastating regionally, had more limited effects on global trade due to the Cold War's managed bipolarity. However, they demonstrated how prolonged regional conflicts disrupt local economies, create refugee flows that strain neighboring states, and divert national resources from productive investment to military expenditure.

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AND TRADE WARFARE

In the modern era, trade itself has become a weapon. Economic sanctions the deliberate restriction of trade flows to punish or coerce an adversary represent the intersection of diplomacy, warfare, and commerce. When wars break out, or when nations threaten conflict, sanctions often follow, with devastating consequences for trade.

The sanctions imposed on Russia following its invasion of Ukraine represent one of the most sweeping economic warfare campaigns in history. Western nations cut Russia off from the SWIFT international banking system, restricted technology exports, imposed oil embargoes, and froze hundreds of billions in sovereign assets. Russia, in turn, weaponized its energy exports, reducing natural gas flows to Europe and triggering an energy crisis that reshaped the continent's industrial output and trade competitiveness.

The effects rippled far beyond the two belligerent parties. European nations scrambled to find alternative energy suppliers, accelerating liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from the United States and Qatar. Global shipping routes were redrawn as tankers avoided sanctioned Russian ports. Fertilizer exports from Russia and Belarus crucial to agricultural production worldwide were disrupted, raising input costs for farmers from Brazil to Bangladesh.

This dynamic is not new. The oil embargo of 1973, triggered by the Arab-Israeli War, caused a quadrupling of oil prices and plunged Western economies into recession, illustrating how armed conflict in one region can weaponize commodity trade to devastating global effect.

CONCLUSION

War and world trade exist in a relationship of fundamental tension. War disrupts routes, destroys infrastructure, weaponizes commodities, collapses investment, fragments supply chains, and reverses the gains of globalization. The costs are borne not just by belligerent nations but by farmers in Africa, manufacturers in Asia, consumers in Europe, and workers everywhere who depend on the smooth functioning of the global trading system.

Yet the relationship is not simply one of victimhood. Trade, built carefully and equitably, can itself be a force for stability creating the mutual dependencies that make the costs of conflict prohibitively high. The challenge for the twenty-first century is to rebuild and reinforce the institutions, norms, and relationships that allow trade to perform this peace-sustaining function, even as geopolitical tensions strain them to their limits.

In the end, the most powerful argument for free and open world trade is not purely economic. It is that a world which trades together is a world with more to lose from war and therefore, one with stronger reasons to choose peace.

The Human Dimension: Displacement and Labor Markets

War's impact on trade extends to its devastating human consequences. Mass displacement of populations disrupts labor markets, shuts down factories, and collapses domestic consumption. Ukraine lost a significant portion of its agricultural workforce as men were conscripted and civilians fled westward. This directly reduced the country's productive capacity and its ability to fulfill export contracts.

Refugee crises create humanitarian emergencies that absorb enormous international resources resources that might otherwise support development and trade. Host countries face increased public expenditure, labor market pressures, and social tensions. The long-term integration of displaced populations into productive economic activity is a process measured in decades, not years.

The Path Forward: Trade as a Tool for Peace

If war disrupts trade, the inverse logic also holds: trade integration can reduce the likelihood of war. Nations that are economically interdependent — that rely on each other for critical goods, that have businesses with operations across each other's borders, that share currency arrangements and financial systems have powerful material incentives to resolve disputes peacefully.

The European Union is the most successful historical example. Built on the premise that integrating the coal and steel industries of France and Germany would make war between them economically unthinkable, the EU expanded into the world's largest single market. War between EU member states is today almost inconceivable not primarily because of military deterrence, but because of the depth of economic interdependence. This suggests a constructive agenda: strengthening multilateral trade institutions, deepening economic integration between potential rivals where possible, maintaining open trading systems even under geopolitical stress, and investing in the resilience of global supply chains to reduce the economic disruption caused by regional conflicts.

War Disrupts Lives and Global Trade

- War forces mass displacement, breaking communities and shrinking labor forces, which directly reduces production capacity and weakens trade output across affected regions.
- Large-scale migration disrupts labor markets as skilled workers leave conflict zones, causing shortages in key industries and slowing economic recovery significantly.
- Conscription during war removes working-age men from agriculture and industries, reducing productivity and weakening export capabilities of affected nations.
- Destruction of infrastructure shuts factories and transport networks, halting production cycles and delaying delivery of goods to international markets.
- Refugee crises demand massive humanitarian aid, diverting global financial resources that could otherwise support development, trade growth, and economic stability.
- Long-term integration of displaced populations into economies takes decades, delaying recovery and limiting their contribution to global trade systems.
- Host countries face pressure on jobs, housing, and public services, often leading to economic strain and social tensions within local communities.

War Disrupts Trade and Global Stability

War has a powerful and damaging impact on global trade and economic stability. When conflict begins, it destroys infrastructure such as roads, ports, and factories, stopping production and disrupting supply chains. Workers are displaced or forced into military service, reducing labor availability and weakening industries. As a result, exports decline and countries struggle to meet global demand.

At the same time, war creates large refugee crises. Millions of people are forced to leave their homes, putting pressure on neighboring countries. These host nations face increased demand for jobs, housing, healthcare, and public services, which can strain their economies and create social tensions.Trade routes also become unsafe during war, increasing transportation costs and causing delays in the movement of goods. Essential commodities like food, fuel, and raw materials become expensive, affecting countries far beyond the conflict zone.

However, strong economic ties between nations can act as a deterrent to war. Countries that depend on each other for trade are more likely to maintain peace. Strengthening global trade systems, improving cooperation, and building resilient supply chains are essential steps to reduce the impact of conflicts and ensure long-term economic stability.

Arsenal crush Fulham to strengthen PL title charge over Manchester City

Gyokeres and Saka inspire dominant Arsenal victory as title pressure intensifies significantly

LONDON

Arsenal FC tightened their grip on the Premier League title race with a commanding 3-0 victory over Fulham FC, opening a six-point lead over defending champions Manchester City FC.

A first-half double from Swedish striker Viktor Gyokeres and a goal from Bukayo Saka ensured Arsenal maintained momentum in the closing weeks of the season.

The Gunners made a fast and aggressive start at the Emirates Stadium and took the lead in just the ninth minute. Saka brilliantly skipped past Raul Jimenez before squaring the ball for Gyokeres, who calmly finished from close range.

Gyokeres later turned provider in the 40th minute, holding up play well before feeding Saka, who beat former Arsenal goalkeeper Bernd Leno at the near post to double the advantage.

The Swedish striker completed his superb evening deep into first-half stoppage time when he powered home a header from Leandro Trossard's cross, taking his tally to 21 goals in all competitions this season.

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta, with one eye on Tuesday's UEFA Champions League semifinal second leg against Atletico Madrid, was comfortable enough to substitute Saka at halftime after the winger's influential display.

Arsenal dominated throughout and could easily have added more goals. Gyokeres came close to completing a hat-trick but was denied by an excellent save from Leno, while defender Riccardo Calafiori also had a goal ruled out for offside.

The victory takes Arsenal to 76 points from 35 matches, while Manchester City remain on 70 points with two games in hand. Arsenal also strengthened their goal difference advantage, which could prove crucial in the title race.

Fulham, currently 10th in the standings, struggled to create meaningful opportunities and rarely troubled Arsenal's defence during an one-sided contest.

With the Premier League season entering its decisive phase, Arsenal have now significantly increased the pressure on Manchester City in the battle for the title.

Kostyuk defeats Andreeva to clinch emotional Madrid Open title triumph

MADRID

Marta Kostyuk produced a stirring performance to defeat Mirra Andreeva 7-5, 6-3 and capture the Madrid Open women's singles title.

The emotionally charged final carried added significance because of the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia following the 2022 invasion. In keeping with the stance adopted by many Ukrainian athletes since the conflict began, Kostyuk and Andreeva did not shake hands at the net after the match or pose together during the trophy ceremony.

Kostyuk, ranked 23rd in the world, collapsed onto the clay court in celebration after Andreeva's final shot sailed long on match point. Overcome with emotion, the Ukrainian covered her face with her hands before rising to perform a celebratory backflip to the delight of the Madrid crowd.

Meanwhile, the 19-year-old Andreeva, who had entered the final as one of the tournament favourites, was left in tears at courtside after missing out on the title.

During the trophy presentation, Kostyuk concluded her speech with the words "glory to God and glory to Ukraine," drawing loud applause from spectators. The victory marked Kostyuk's third career WTA title and her second consecutive tournament triumph after winning the event in Rouen last week.

Ballard sent off for hair-pulling as Sunderland draw against Wolves dramatically

WOLVERHAMPTON

Daniel Ballard became the second Premier League player this season to be sent off for pulling an opponent's hair as Sunderland AFC drew 1-1 with Wolverhampton Wanderers FC.

The controversial moment occurred midway through the first half when Ballard tangled with Wolves striker Tolu Arokodare while contesting a high ball. Television replays showed the Sunderland defender grabbing and pulling a handful of Arokodare's hair as both players moved backward.

The Nigerian forward immediately went to ground clutching his head, prompting referee Paul Tierney to review the incident on the pitchside monitor. After consulting VAR footage, Tierney produced a straight red card for Ballard in the 24th minute for violent conduct.

The dismissal changed the complexion of the match after Sunderland had made an impressive start.

The visitors had taken the lead early through Nordi Mukiele, whose strike gave Sunderland hope of securing an important away victory.

However, being reduced to 10 men forced Sunderland onto the defensive for much of the contest as Wolves increased the pressure in search of an equaliser.

Sunderland defender dismissed after controversial incident involving Wolves striker Tolu Arokodare during clash.

The hosts eventually found a breakthrough in the 54th minute through defender Hugo Bueno, who ended Wolves' three-match scoring drought with a well-taken finish.

Despite their numerical advantage, Wolves were unable to find a winning goal, though the point ended their run of defeats and marked their first league point since March.

Ballard's dismissal mirrored a similar incident earlier this season involving Michael Keane of Everton FC, who was also sent off for pulling Arokodare's hair during a Premier League match in January. Keane later received a three-match suspension for violent conduct.

The repeated incidents involving Arokodare have sparked discussion over player discipline and the increased scrutiny provided by VAR in dealing with off-the-ball fouls.

While Sunderland will regret losing control after Ballard's red card, Wolves may also feel disappointed not to have fully capitalised against a depleted opponent at home.

VANCOUVER WHITECAPS SALVAGE VALUABLE AWAY POINT AFTER DOMINATING POSSESSION AGAINST STRUGGLING LA GALAXY

Laborda rescues late draw for Whitecaps against Galaxy in MLS clash

CARSON

Mathias Laborda scored a late equaliser as Vancouver Whitecaps FC earned a 1-1 draw against LA Galaxy in Major League Soccer action.

Laborda struck in the 82nd minute to rescue a point for Vancouver after the visitors had controlled large portions of the contest but trailed following an early second-half mistake.

The Whitecaps, who entered the match with eight wins from their opening nine league games, saw their club-record four-match winning streak come to an end. However, the result helped maintain their strong start to the MLS season.

Vancouver dominated possession throughout the match, controlling 58 per cent of the ball and outshooting the Galaxy 19-7, including a 5-2 advantage in attempts on target.

The breakthrough for Los Angeles came immediately after halftime when Joseph Paintsil capitalised on a defensive error. In the opening moments of the second half, midfielder Lucas Sanabria intercepted a misplaced pass from Whitecaps goalkeeper Yohei Takaoka before quickly setting up Paintsil, who calmly finished from the right side of the penalty area.

Despite falling behind, Vancouver continued to push forward and eventually found the equaliser eight minutes from full-time. Midfielder Sebastian Berhalter delivered a dangerous free-kick from the left flank toward the back post, where Laborda rose unmarked to head home from close range.

The goal capped a persistent attacking display from the Whitecaps, who consistently created pressure against the Galaxy defence.

Galaxy goalkeeper JT Marcinkowski produced four saves to help his side secure a point, while Takaoka recovered from his earlier mistake to finish with one save.

The draw leaves Vancouver with an impressive 8-1-1 record, continuing one of the strongest starts in club history. The Whitecaps also became only the second MLS team in the post-shootout era since 2000 to win eight of their first nine matches in a season.

For LA Galaxy, the result moves them to 3-4-4 as they continue searching for consistency in a difficult campaign.

Golden Tempo wins Kentucky Derby as Cherie DeVaux creates racing history dramatically

LOUISVILLE

Golden Tempo stormed from the back of the field to win the 152nd Kentucky Derby on Saturday, giving trainer Cherie DeVaux a historic triumph as the first woman ever to train a Derby winner.

The emotional victory at Churchill Downs marked a groundbreaking moment in horse racing history. DeVaux became only the second woman to train the winner of a Triple Crown race after Jena Antonucci guided Arcangelo to victory in the 2023 Belmont Stakes.

After days of being questioned about the possibility of making history, DeVaux admitted she was almost speechless following the dramatic victory.

"I'm just glad I don't have to answer that question anymore," she joked as the crowd applauded.

Ridden brilliantly by Jose Ortiz, Golden Tempo surged past 17 rivals around the final turn before overtaking race favourite Renegade in the closing metres.

Ortiz, competing in his 11th Kentucky Derby, secured his first victory in America's most famous horse race. The jockey described the triumph as the fulfilment of a lifelong dream.

Golden Tempo completed the one-and-a-quarter-mile contest in 2:02.27 and won at odds of 23-1 in front of more than 100,000 spectators.

The victory capped an extraordinary journey for DeVaux, who began her racing career 22 years ago as an exercise rider before launching her own stable eight years ago. She credited her upbringing in a large family and the support of her husband for helping her pursue a career in horse racing. DeVaux also revealed she became aware of the wider significance of her achievement after noticing young girls watching her at the track earlier in the week.

Nelly Korda taps in for eagle to build three-shot lead in Mexico

PLAYA DEL CARMEN

World No.1 Nelly Korda continued her dominant form at the Riviera Maya Open in Mayakoba, firing a five-under 67 to extend her lead to three shots after three rounds. She capped her round with a superb approach to 18 inches for eagle on the final hole, finishing at 14-under 202. Korda is chasing a third win of the season and back-to-back LPGA titles.Thailand's Arpichaya Yubol sits second after a 66, while Minami Katsu is four back in Mexico event.

Vinesh Phogat fears bias, hostile atmosphere ahead of wrestling comeback tournament

NEW DELHI

Vinesh Phogat has voiced serious concerns about safety, fairness and possible biased officiating ahead of her return to competitive wrestling at the National Open Ranking Tournament in Gonda.

In a video message released before her comeback event, the wrestler-turned-politician said she feared competing in an environment allegedly influenced by former Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, against whom she and other wrestlers had filed sexual harassment complaints.

"I was one of the six women wrestlers who filed complaints," Vinesh said, referring to the ongoing legal case against Singh. "The case is still in court and competing at a venue linked to him creates immense mental pressure."

The 31-year-old wrestler, who has resumed training after a lengthy break, said she wanted to return honestly and win medals for India again but questioned whether she would receive a fair opportunity on the mat.

"The tournament is being organised at a place where his influence is strong," she alleged. "Who officiates matches, who awards points and who acts as mat chairman can all be controlled."

Vinesh urged members of the media and sporting fraternity to remain present at the venue to ensure transparency and accountability during the competition. She also warned that if any untoward incident occurred involving her, her team or supporters, the government should be held responsible.

The wrestler clarified that she was not seeking special treatment but only wanted competition results to genuinely reflect the athletes' hard work and performances.

Vinesh will compete in the 57kg category at the tournament, having previously fought in the 50kg and 53kg divisions. She has been away from competition since the 2024 Summer Olympics, where she was disqualified before the final for being overweight.

The wrestler later entered politics and won the Haryana Assembly election from Julana constituency on a Indian National Congress ticket in 2024. The controversy involving Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh triggered nationwide protests in 2023, with several leading Indian wrestlers demanding action over allegations of sexual harassment. Multiple women wrestlers filed complaints, leading to court proceedings that remain ongoing.

Singh has consistently denied all allegations against him, while the matter continues to cast a shadow over Indian wrestling administration.

Button hopes Formula One returns to India with Buddh Circuit revival plans

BENGALURU

Jenson Button has expressed excitement over ongoing efforts to bring Formula One back to India, saying it would be "great" to see the Indian Grand Prix return to the global racing calendar. The former world champion fondly remembered his experiences racing at the Buddh International Circuit, which hosted the Indian Grand Prix from 2011 to 2013 before it was discontinued. India's only FIA Grade 1 circuit is once again being discussed as a potential Formula One venue, although reports suggest the sport may not return before 2028 despite recent efforts from the Union Sports Ministry.

Button, who enjoyed podium finishes in all three Indian Grands Prix and finished runner-up in the inaugural race, described the Buddh circuit as one of the most exciting modern tracks on the Formula One calendar.

"The track itself was awesome. It was fast and really enjoyable to drive," Button said during an interaction in Bengaluru. "It was a real shame when the race was cancelled because it was one of the most interesting new circuits."

The 2009 world champion also recalled his first visit to India as a memorable cultural experience beyond motorsport. "Experiencing Indian food was amazing," he said. "I also remember seeing five people and even a monkey on one motorcycle. It was unbelievable and something I had never seen before."

Button added that Formula One's return to India would be positive for both the sport and its rapidly growing fanbase in the country.

The Briton also shared his views on Formula One's upcoming 2026 power unit regulations, which feature a 50-50 hybrid energy split and greater emphasis on sustainable fuel technology.

While admitting that many fans still dream of the loud V10 engines from earlier eras, Button said Formula One needed to continue evolving technologically to keep manufacturers invested in the sport.

IPL 2026: Raghuvanshi's 59 powers KKR to seven-wicket win vs SRH

Raghuvanshi shines as KKR chase down SRH target in style.

HYDERABAD

Kolkata Knight Riders continued their dominant run in IPL 2026, registering a convincing seven-wicket victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad to seal their third straight win of the season. Chasing 166, KKR reached 169/3 in 18.2 overs, led by a composed yet impactful 59 off 47 balls from Angkrish Raghuvanshi, who anchored the innings beautifully after early momentum.

Ajinkya Rahane provided solid support with 43 off 36 balls, stitching key partnerships that kept KKR ahead of the required rate. Finn Allen had earlier provided a fiery start with 29 off 13 balls before Pat Cummins struck. Rinku Singh (22*) and Cameron Green (3*) calmly finished the chase without further hiccups.

Earlier, Sunrisers Hyderabad posted 165 in 19 overs after a strong but short-lived batting effort. Travis Head blasted 61 off 28 balls, setting the tone before Varun Chakaravarthy turned the game with a three-wicket haul. His breakthroughs in the middle overs triggered a collapse. Sunil Narine also created history by reaching 201 IPL wickets, removing key SRH batters including Ishan Kishan.

KKR's bowling unit remained disciplined throughout, with Anukul Roy and Varun providing crucial support. Despite SRH's aggressive powerplay and Head's brilliance, regular wickets stalled their momentum. The win highlighted KKR's balanced attack and improving batting depth as they comfortably closed out another successful chase.

MI's IPL campaign unravels as star-studded squad struggles for consistency

MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians entered IPL 2026 as one of the strongest contenders on paper, boasting a squad packed with international stars and proven match-winners. But with just two wins in nine matches, the five-time champions now find their playoff hopes hanging by a thread.The franchise retained the core of its successful 2020 title-winning squad and added experienced South African wicketkeeper-batter Quinton de Kock at the auction. Most experts tipped Mumbai Indians to comfortably finish in the top four, given the presence of senior Indian players like Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, captain Hardik Pandya and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah.However, the campaign has quickly spiralled into disappointment. Mumbai Indians are currently ninth on the points table and even five consecutive wins may not be enough to secure qualification.

A major concern has been the poor form of key players. Suryakumar, last season's Player of the Tournament, has struggled badly with the bat, averaging only around 20 with a solitary fifty. Hardik Pandya too has failed to make a significant impact either with bat or ball, while veteran pacer Trent Boult has been ineffective with the new ball.The biggest surprise has been Bumrah's dip in form.

Widely regarded as one of the world's finest T20 bowlers, the fast bowler has managed only three wickets in nine matches, severely weakening Mumbai's bowling attack.Injuries have further complicated matters. Rohit Sharma has been sidelined with a hamstring injury, forcing frequent changes at the top order. Mitchell Santner has also been ruled out, while de Kock sustained a wrist injury after scoring a century.The franchise has already used 22 players this season, highlighting its struggle to settle on a consistent combination. Despite the star power, Mumbai Indians have looked disjointed and short of confidence throughout the tournament.With a poor net run rate and several results needing to go their way, MI's qualification chances now appear extremely slim.

Poor form, injuries and unsettled combinations derail Mumbai Indians' disappointing IPL 2026 season.

INDIA PICK YASTIKA, UNCAPPED NANDINI FOR WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP SQUAD

MUMBAI

India women's national cricket team have included wicketkeeper-batter Yastika Bhatia and uncapped pacer Nandini Sharma in the squad for the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup to be held in England and Wales from June 12.

The squad will also participate in a three-match T20I series against hosts England women's national cricket team beginning May 28 as preparation for the global tournament.

Veteran all-rounder Harmanpreet Kaur will continue to lead the side, while opener Smriti Mandhana has been named vice-captain.

The biggest talking point from the selection meeting was the omission of batter Pratika Rawal from the T20 World Cup squad despite her recent performances. However, Rawal has retained her place in India's squad for the one-off Test against England scheduled at Lord's from July 10 to 13.

All-rounder Amanjot Kaur was unavailable for selection due to injury, forcing the selectors to make adjustments to the balance of the squad.

Nandini Sharma earned her maiden senior national call-up following an impressive campaign in the Women's Premier League with Delhi Capitals Women. The medium pacer claimed 17 wickets in 10 matches and also featured in India's squad for the Women's Asia Cup Rising Stars tournament in Bangkok earlier this year.

India have largely retained the core group from recent ICC events, with experienced players such as Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma and wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh continuing in the squad. Spin-bowling options include Shreyanka Patil and Radha Yadav, while the pace attack will be led by Renuka Thakur and Arundhati Reddy.

Jitesh clarifies 'unprofessional' remark on Vaibhav, says criticism misunderstood completely

BENGALURU

Jitesh Sharma has clarified his controversial "unprofessional" remark about young Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, insisting the comment was made affectionately and taken out of context on social media.

The Royal Challengers Bengaluru wicketkeeper-batter had recently sparked debate after referring to the 15-year-old Rajasthan Royals opener as "unprofessional" during a discussion with former South African star AB de Villiers. The remark quickly triggered criticism online, with many questioning the choice of words used for a teenage player.

However, Jitesh explained that the statement was rooted in his close friendship with the youngster and referred to Sooryavanshi's playful personality off the field rather than his cricketing attitude.

"He is a very good friend of mine and we are very close," Jitesh said during an RCB podcast. "I can call him anything because we share that bond."

The batter revealed that de Villiers had asked him which young player could become a future Indian star, and his immediate response was Sooryavanshi. Jitesh said he greatly admired the teenager's technique, temperament and work ethic, adding that the youngster had the potential to succeed across all three formats for India.

At the same time, Jitesh stressed that Sooryavanshi was still a normal teenager who enjoyed cartoons, ice cream and YouTube videos like any child his age.

"He is only 15 and still behaves like a kid," Jitesh explained. "He loves eating ice cream and watches videos at my house. Let a child be a child."Jitesh said there was immense pressure on young cricketers to constantly behave like seasoned professionals, but players of Sooryavanshi's age should also be allowed to enjoy life away from the game.

Sunrisers Hyderabad riding momentum after recovering strongly from disappointing early-season struggles this campaign.

Franklin praises Nitish Reddy's impact as SRH continue impressive turnaround

HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad assistant coach James Franklin has credited young all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy for playing a key role in the team's resurgence during IPL 2026. After losing three of their opening four matches, Sunrisers Hyderabad have bounced back strongly with a series of impressive performances that lifted them into the top four of the points table. Despite the recent success, Franklin said the team remains focused on taking one match at a time. Franklin said the side was aware of the challenge posed by the defending champions, especially in difficult daytime conditions in Hyderabad."KKR are coming off a couple of wins and we know they are going to be a big challenge for us," Franklin said. "It's a day game as well and the heat can become a factor, so we need to maintain the same intent we have shown in recent matches."-Franklin also highlighted the growing challenge bowlers face in modern T20 cricket, particularly during the PowerPlay overs where aggressive batting has become increasingly dominant."Most teams are trying to work out how to bowl effectively against destructive batting in the PowerPlay," he explained. "We are constantly analysing how we can use our bowling resources better and create half opportunities during that phase."The former New Zealand all-rounder reserved special praise for Nitish Kumar Reddy, whose contributions with both bat and ball have added balance to the SRH lineup. Franklin noted that the youngster's improved fitness and increased pace have made him a valuable option across different stages of an innings."He gives us that fifth or sixth bowling option and his pace is up from last season," Franklin said. "He looks free and is clearly enjoying his cricket at the moment."Franklin also commended South African batter Heinrich Klaasen for maintaining remarkable consistency this season. He suggested Klaasen's freshness and confidence had helped him deliver impactful performances regularly in the demanding T20 format.

Jayawardene backs struggling MI stars despite disastrous IPL campaign this season

MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene has defended his underperforming star players, insisting the team's disappointing IPL 2026 campaign cannot be blamed on individuals alone. Mumbai Indians suffered another setback after losing to Chennai Super Kings, leaving the five-time champions near the bottom of the points table with their playoff hopes rapidly fading.The struggles of senior players such as Jasprit Bumrah, Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma have become a major talking point this season.

Bumrah, widely regarded as one of the world's best T20 bowlers, has managed only three wickets in nine matches, while Suryakumar has averaged around 20 with the bat. Tilak Varma too has struggled for consistency despite flashes of promise.However, Jayawardene said the team remained fully confident in the abilities of its experienced players and expected them to regain form soon.Speaking about Suryakumar, the former Sri Lankan captain said the batter was batting well in patches but had been unfortunate on several occasions."He just needs a couple of confidence-boosting innings," Jayawardene said. "Sometimes when things are not going your way, even good shots find fielders. He is disappointed himself but continues to work hard."Jayawardene also stressed that Tilak Varma was still developing as a T20 cricketer and learning to adapt to different match situations and batting roles."T20 cricket is not easy," he explained. "The more situations he experiences, the better he will understand what is required tactically and mentally.

MITTAL FAMILY, POONAWALLA ACQUIRE RAJASTHAN ROYALS IN LANDMARK RS 15,600 CRORE DEAL

MUMBAI

Rajasthan Royals have entered a new era after industrialist Lakshmi N. Mittal, his son Aditya Mittal and vaccine entrepreneur Adar Poonawalla agreed to acquire a majority stake in the franchise in a deal valued at nearly Rs 15,600 crore.The acquisition, valued at USD 1.65 billion, includes the IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals along with its overseas teams — Paarl Royals in South Africa and Barbados Royals in the Caribbean Premier League.According to a statement issued by the Mittal family, the agreement was finalised after the competing US-based consortium led by Kal Somani, Rob Walton and Sheila Ford Hamp withdrew from the bidding process. Sources indicated that the rival bid reportedly failed due diligence checks.Under the revised ownership structure, the Mittal family will hold approximately 75 per cent stake in Rajasthan Royals, while Poonawalla will own around 18 per cent. The remaining 7 per cent stake will continue with approved existing investors, including current stakeholder Manoj Badale.The transaction remains subject to approvals from the Board of Control for Cricket in India, the Competition Commission of India, the IPL Governing Council and other regulatory authorities. The deal is expected to be completed during the third quarter of 2026.The newly restructured Rajasthan Royals board will feature Lakshmi Mittal, Aditya Mittal, Vanisha Mittal-Bhatia, Adar Poonawalla and Manoj Badale, who will continue to remain associated with the franchise in an advisory role.Lakshmi Mittal, whose family roots trace back to Rajasthan, said joining the Royals carried special emotional significance for him. Aditya Mittal highlighted the franchise's reputation for nurturing young talent and expressed determination to continue that legacy.Poonawalla, who had previously shown interest in investing in other IPL franchises, described Rajasthan Royals as a premier cricket brand with strong long-term potential. Founded in 2008, Rajasthan Royals became the inaugural IPL champions and have since built a reputation for discovering and developing emerging cricketing talent across the world.

Hardik lacks support as Mumbai Indians campaign collapses, says Manoj Tiwary

MUMBAI

Hardik Pandya has been left to shoulder the blame for Mumbai Indians' disappointing IPL 2026 season without adequate support from teammates, according to former India batter Manoj Tiwary.

Mumbai Indians slumped to their seventh defeat of the season after losing to Chennai Super Kings, leaving the five-time champions on the brink of elimination from the tournament. With only two wins in nine matches, MI currently sit ninth on the points table and their qualification hopes are now extremely slim.

Tiwary said Pandya had become an easy target for criticism despite several senior players failing to deliver consistently throughout the campaign.

"It feels like no one is standing with Hardik," Tiwary remarked. "The support he needs simply is not there."

While acknowledging that the captain himself has struggled with form and leadership, Tiwary stressed that responsibility for the poor performances could not rest entirely on Pandya's shoulders.

He pointed to the inconsistent displays from key batters like Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma, saying Mumbai's senior players had failed to step up during crucial moments.

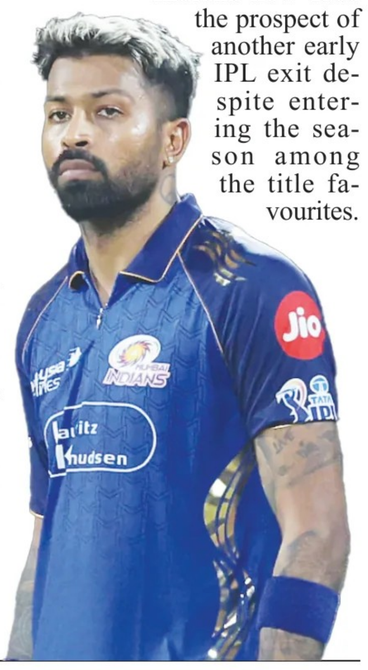
"Yes, the captain has a role and he has not been at his best," Tiwary said. "But other players also need to take responsibility. Without collective performances, results will not come."

Despite possessing one of the strongest squads on paper, featuring experienced internationals such as Rohit Sharma, Pandya and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, Mumbai Indians have appeared tactically unsettled throughout the season.

Former India spinner Murali Kartik also painted a grim picture for MI's playoff hopes, stating the team's campaign was "99.999 per cent over."

Kartik noted that even if Mumbai Indians win all their remaining matches, they can only reach 14 points, while teams above them already have stronger positions and games in hand.

With mounting pressure, poor form and injuries affecting the squad, Mumbai Indians now face the prospect of another early IPL exit despite entering the season among the title favourites.



City Hilights (English Daily) published by P. Sunil Kumar (Publisher) on behalf of Immaculate Broadcasting Consortium World News (P) Ltd., No. 18, JRV Court, Queens's Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and printed at Manipal Media Network Limited Opp. Govt School, Kempalinganahalli, Near Kunigal Cross, Nelamangala TQ, Bangalore Rural Dist. -562123, Printed at No-7/2 plot no.CA-3/1,28(p)&29(p) Kapanoor 2nd Stage Industrial Area Kapnoor Village Kalaburagi -585104. Printed at S. J. R. V. Printers, No. 208 Plot No. B-019 KSSIDC Industrial Area, Irfan Ahamed Khan Pathan, 4th Main Road Gamanagatti, Hubballi-Dharwad – 580025. and Elegant Offset Printers Pvt. Ltd. No. 5-61/1, Shed No. M-6, Yeyyadi Industrial Estate, Yeyyadi, Mangalore - 575 008. (RNI No: KARENG / 2015 / 63243), Regd. No. BGGPO-2581/2017-2019 Posted at Bengaluru PSO-560026 Email - cityhilights.news@gmail.com Phone: 080-41209042. Copyright. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.